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Coach and Bus Week
The PSV industry's news weekly Issue 288 25 September 1997

OPTIMO WITH WIDE APPEAL

26-seater debut at the NEC show

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First B7R transplant at heart of new Plaxton

ALSO IN THIS ISSUE: All the PSV News 4-16 ■ Tour News 18 & 19 ■ Legal News 20 & 21 ■ Marksman 22 ■ Diary 24 ■ Letters 25 ■ Wide-bodied Optimo unveiled 27 & 28 ■ Deals and Dealers 30 & 31 ■ Back-up 32 ■ People 55

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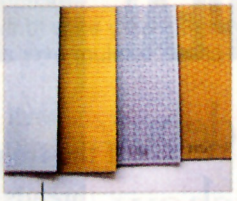

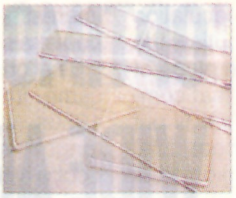

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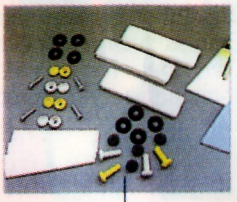

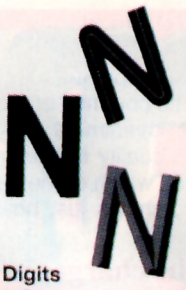

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EDITORIAL

Outside-lane ban must be lifted

BRIAN LEESE of G&B Travel is bravely leading the fight to ensure that the previous Government's ill-conceived motorway outside-lane ban is consigned to the history books.

In the wake of the tragic accident involving one of his coaches, Mr Leese says the coach industry is being exposed to unnecessary dangers.

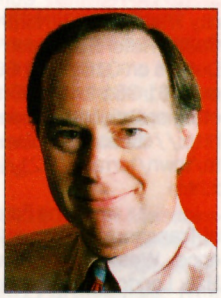
Over two years ago this magazine campaigned to 'scrap the ban'. This was followed by a weekly report on drivers' observations once the 1 January 1996 start date had passed. CPT, too, launched its strategy to ensure that the ban is lifted at the end of the trial.

The CPT committed itself to monitoring the effects of the ban throughout the two-year trial period and sending the results of this research to the Government to be used as part of the evaluation of the trial.

Initially the volume of responses was encouraging. But the threats to coach safety were quite simply frightening.

However, within six months the energy which had given the campaign its momentum was starting to dissipate. Twenty four months was to prove too long a time to sustain a battle and the report forms dried up.

This was not to say that the industry's fears had not been confirmed. Safety has been compromised but, to their great credit, coach drivers adjusted to the new regime and dutifully kept within the law. Yet, as *CBW* experiences regularly on road tests and educational trips, the strain was there for all to see. All too frequently coaches are caught as the soft filling in the HGV sandwich, with a truck in front blocking vision and those to the left refusing, or unable, to give way. Because speed differences can be as little as one or two miles per hour it is not uncommon for a coach to be trapped in this situation for up to six miles - or more. There's no pleasure in this predicament - and no escape.



Consequently, the pent-up frustration among coach operators and their drivers has been ready to boil over. How sad, therefore, that it needed the loss of life to refocus attention on this very serious safety issue.

The outside-lane ban must be lifted and the industry has three short months to force the change.

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events

30 September: Omnibus Society, The Hants & Sussex Story. Contact Barry Le Jeune, 0171 918 3295

7 October: Passenger Transport: Integrated Solutions. Chartered Institute of Transport Conference at the Millbank Media Centre, Millbank Tower, London SW1. Details on 0171 233 7600, fax 0171 233 7611

9 October: Buses Worldwide meeting at Fred Tallant Hall, London NW1. Prof Peter White on The role of Public Sector Operators in India. Details from Hon Sec, 3 Cypress Drive, Fleet, Hants, GU13 9HE

9-11 October: Coach and Bus 97, National Exhibition Centre, Birmingham. Contact Steve Rooney, on 0171 240 5800, fax 0171 240 5805

10-22 October: SmartCity '97, smartcard technology, five venues throughout UK. Tickets £75. Contact Holly Jones, tel 01763 249933

16-18 October: Mitcar, Paris. Details 00 33 141 299727

17-22 October: Coach and Bus '97, Hallen, Kortrijk, Belgium. Details 00 32 51 226060, fax /9273

27 - 30 October: Bus Business, Verona, Italy. Contact CIEMME, on fax 00 39 464 551 938

29 October: London's Transport Future, Chartered Institute of Transport Conference at The TowerThistle Hotel, London E1. Speakers include Glenda Jackson and Steven Norris. Details on 0171 233 7600, fax 0171 233 7611

12-15 November: Community Transport 97, Norbreck Castle Hotel Blackpool. Details on 0161 366 6685 or 0161 351 1475. E-mail: cta.man@dial.pipex.com, http://dspace.dial.pipex.com/town/terrace/pi21/index.htm

19 November: The Future of Transport Policy, conference. Westminster Central Hall, London. Details from John Watson on 0171 263 7389, fax 0171 263 7424

23 January 1998: *CBW*'s Coach Industry Awards, Metropole Hotel, NEC. Details from Kate Dalton, Evention, 5 Fenlake Business Park, Fengate, Peterborough PE1 5QB, tel 01733 311599, fax 01733 343310

Fact that fuel duty has pushed up PSV fuel prices 66% in two

FDR - a burning issue

By Mark Williams

WITHIN six weeks of the end of the Government's consultation period for its transport review, fuel duty has emerged as one of the burning issues.

The issue reached national newspapers when Go-Ahead Group warned the City to expect diminishing returns as tax and duty changes added to costs. GAG md Martin Ballinger pointed out that, despite purporting to promote public transport, the new Government's first Budget added 16 per cent to GAG's diesel bill.

Phillip Hunt: need cash to attain parity

"It is important that the Government understands that this is not some sort of gravy train for bus operators," he said. "We really need a profit margin of 15 per cent to be able to invest and we will not make that if the Government keeps heaping charges upon us."

His thoughts were echoed by Pullman Group, whose London Coaches and London Sightseeing Tours between them pay almost £1 million in unrebated fuel costs: "It is so alarming, that I have even written to commuter customers asking them to support us," said Phillip Hunt, finance director.

"The increase in fuel duty has, in the last two years, increased fuel costs by 66%. Put another way, it has added £87.50 to a £1,300 commuter season ticket. Fuel is a big proportion of our costs."

Little Pullman mileage qualifies for fuel duty rebate: "Our bill amounts to about half our employee costs and a third of annual vehicle costs. We really need this money if only to achieve parity with our competitor, the rail system, which gets full rebate" said Mr Hunt. "Instead, we see gradually diminishing support for public transport as a whole."

Peter Shipp, owner of EYMS group in Hull, dismissed the suggestion that FDR was an example of private industry demanding more public finance: "We only want to haul back what we have lost," he said.

He says EYMS is paying £1.3 million more for fuel than five years ago, in the group with barely more than £30 million turnover: "The last Budget alone added

New Plaxton/Volvo among the many attractions at the NEC

THE PRE-SHOW launch of Volvo's rear-engined coach chassis features a budget-priced coach with Plaxton body targeting interurban and commuter operations.

With less than two weeks to go before the doors open on the eagerly-awaited Coach & Bus 97 at the NEC on 9, 10, 11 December, the new Plaxton/Volvo is among the many significant new products that will be making their public debut.

Full details of the new coach, which is based on Volvo's multi-purpose B7R chassis, are on pages 14 & 15 of this issue of *CBW*.

Also in this magazine are first pictures and driving impressions of one of Toyota's most important innovations since it unveiled the first Optimo small coach around a decade ago.

As from early next year UK operators will be offered a wide-bodied Optimo which uses two-plus-two seating to boost carrying capacity. See pages 22&23 for details.

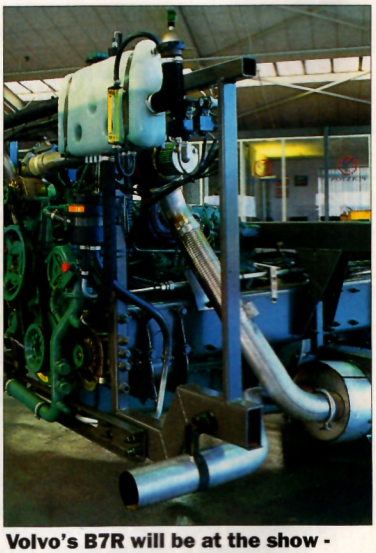
Meanwhile, the freshly-painted Mercedes-Benz 0405N lowfloor bus being finished at UVG in Hampshire will be there to examine, even if its left-hand-drive version will already be familiar to European show visitors.

Scania is weighing in with a new lowfloor chassis, and has kept details under wraps. Its L941B coach chassis is on show with both Van Hool and Irizar bodywork. Its chief claim to fame is fuel economy.

Optare is feeling very bullish, with its new, as-yet unnamed, integral midibus, the first public airing of its Solero coach, and the announcement of its UniTec aftersales and service facility in Rotherham, set to open in November.

Nor do the coach manufacturers have it all their own way. BBA Friction, *aka* Don, will be launching a drum-friendly brake lining which promises not only extended lining and drum life but improved braking.

■ *Don't miss next week's Coach & Bus '97 Show Preview*



Volvo's B7R will be at the show - encased in Plaxton's new Prima body (see pages 14&15)

UK's first Scania/Cityliner

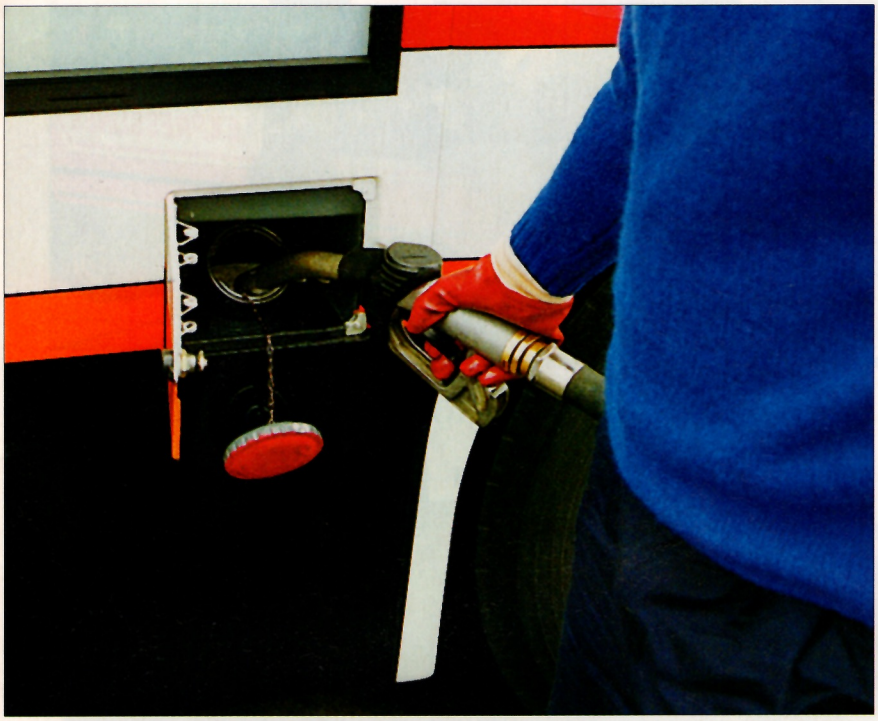
AMONG the star exhibits on the SJ Carlton stand at Coach & Bus 97 in two weeks will be the UK's first Scania-engined Neoplan Cityliner.

The integral Cityliner coach is available with the Scania engine/gearbox pack as an option to the Mercedes-Benz/ZF combination which has been fitted to all vehicles previously sold in the UK.

Supreme of Hadleigh near Benfleet, Essex has ordered the Cityliner as one of five new coaches it is expecting for next year. Neoplan is predominantly a manufacturer of integral coaches and buses. However, it offers the Transliner as a separate body on chassis which, in the United Kingdom, is on Dennis Javelin GX whereas it is fitted on rear-engined MAN for sales in France.

Also at the show will be the 9.9- metre Neoplan Jetliner in the colours of Hatts Coaches, Chippenham...see Deals and Dealers - pages 30&31

years does not support Government's industry-friendly claim



Bus industry says that the fact it pays fuel duty whereas rail does not is unfair

£300,000 to our fuel bill," said Mr Shipp.

"We have not been able to invest as much as we would like in vehicles, and the fuel increases have had a dramatic effect on our attempts to keep fares down. We are struggling to keep rural buses running."

Mr Shipp said Government offers to rebate more fuel duty for environmentally-friendly vehicles and fuels was a no-go because the gains in running 'green' buses are lost in increased fuel consumption.

He said rebate could easily be ring-fenced to encourage investment.

"There must be some formula to link fuel duty to new buses. I would welcome some relevant grants or capital allowances."

Mr Hunt said the suggestion that FDR was simply an opportunity for the industry to line its pockets was insulting: "I am sure we could, for example, structure our sightseeing operation to make it eligible for FDR.

"We do not, partly because it might have an adverse effect on customers, but mainly because we would feel morally uncomfortable about it... it would be outside of the spirit of the legislation."

■ *What do you think could be done to link fuel duty rebate to 'green' investment? Contact CBW at the usual address.*

First coach op to get in on the ACT

THE King's Ferry of Gillingham has become the first coach operator to join newly-formed Association for Commuter Transport.

"The King's Ferry is keen to be part of the initiatives which ACT is introducing, in particular the concept of reducing car dependency and creating better transport alternatives for commuters working in London," said The King's Ferry's commuter officer, Samantha Bowhay.

ACT's Jim Carley, former regional secretary for the Confederation of Passnger Transport, was delaighted at the news: ACT is delighted to welcome the King's Ferry into membership, and we hope that other commuter coach operators follow their lead," he said.

ACT is based in London, on 0181 741 1516, fax 0181 741 5993.

Cooks to be run by SN managers

SOUTHERN National managers Paul Landymore and Nigel Billinger have taken over at Cooks Services - a small-vehicle coach business on the Somerset border.

Current owners Ian and Jill Cook are set to retire after 18 years and hand over the running of the company's 15 minicoaches and 53-seat coaches - a Tiger Duple and Bedford Plaxton - to the new company, Landylines Ltd.

"It's a big change for all of us," said Somerset manager Mr Landymore. "I have been at Southern National for a total of 14 years."

Mr Landymore said the existing work, most of which is school contracts and private hire, left scope for development: "Many of the vehicles are only on the road for two hours a day," he said.

The staff and the leasehold premises - Whiteball Garage at Wellington, near Taunton - go with the deal.

Chunnel's first operating profit

EUROTUNNEL has turned in its first operating profit in the first half of 1997 despite losing £29 million in the previous half-year.

The profit, £7 million, is a result of increased turnover to £169 million, January to June, and a further £52 million advanced by insurers after the tunnel fire. Operating costs have been reduced by 8%.

Financial restructuring has still not been agreed with bankers and,as a result, financial charges of more than £300 million account for Eurotunnel's net loss of £323 million. Once the new deal has been signed, charges will drop by £108 million.

Le Shuttle has 44% of the channel tourism market and 29% of the freight market.

EYMS still involved in coaching

PETER Shipp, owner of EYMS, has asked us to point out that, despite the split of National Holidays from the group, EYMS is still heavily involved in coaching.

Though the National Holidays demerger (*CBW*, 18 September) took 62 of the coach fleet to Godfrey Burley - working chiefly on tours - there are still 51 coaches in the EYMS fleet, and there is no plan to get out of coach operation. The bulk of them are based in Hull, 13 of the 20 working National Express diagrams, there are a dozen at Finglands, and the remainder are scattered through EYMS depots.

in brief

■ **THE junction of London's Liverpool Road and Upper Street in Islington is to get the Red Route treatment. A £200,000 improvement to the crossing gives buses and cyclists free road space and improves footpath width for pedestrians. The scheme is expected to be completed by December.**

■ **THE Energy Savings Trust Powershift project, which helps fund purchase of low-emission vehicles, has sponsors for its appearance at the London Motor Show and for regional workshops for operators. Partners in the marketing are Calor, Transco and PowerGen.**

■ **MINISTER for Roads, Lady Hayman, has urged operators to respond to the Government's transport review paper, *Developing an Integrated Transport Policy*. "There is wide agreement that we cannot go on as we are," she says. "Our policies to create an economically and environmentally sustainable transport network will only work if they reflect a broad base of public views."**

■ **GAVIN Strang is leading a transport trade mission to Israel. The delegation of 14 British companies will be demonstrating its abilities to Israeli buyers, and exploring export possibilities. "The UK Government is committed to strenthening relations between Britain and Israel and, by offering my support to the mission, I hope we can develop closer co-operation," said Mr Strang.**

■ **STAGECOACH Manchester's commercial director Ben Colson is to speak at *Quality Partnerships - New Transport, New Millenium*, a conference looking at public-private sector quality agreements. After an opening address by Glenda Jackson MP, the 25 November event at Manchester Airport looks at the issue from several perspectives.**

in brief

TWO COACH FIRMS and a road haulage company are now half way through a three-month testing programme which will be putting the EcoTIN fuel catalyst through its paces. The tests follow a report in this magazine which launched a trial £16 per vehicle pack for operators wishing to prove the manufacturers claimed increase in power and smoother running. EcoTIN is a system which stimulates existing molecules to enhance the quality of the fuel. Contact Peter Giles or Anthony Cory on 01579 344751.

MARGARET BECKETT, president of the Board of Trade and secretary of state for trade and industry, has agreed an extension to 3 October for the Monopolies and Mergers Commission to report on the acquisition by National Express Group of the ScotRail franchise and of the Central Trains franchise. Analysis of numerous overlaps between rail and coach services is taking longer than expected.

WEST YORKSHIRE PASSENGER TRANSPORT (Metro) has been pursuing a policy of integrated improvements to increase the attraction of bus services on main radial corridors in conjunction with bus operators and five district councils. It has asked JMP Consultants to review the effectiveness of such measures in other parts of the country to provide a sound basis for further development of quality partnerships.

THE CONFEDERATION OF PASSENGER TRANSPORT aims to bring home to politicians the benefits of quality partnerships, the massive contribution that coaches make and role of it members in producing an integrated transport system by attending this year's party political conferences with a new design of stand to display the positive messages.

Victory line-up: five minicoaches at Duxford show reflect 'Premier Operator' Expresslines' pride in presentation

Expresslines of Bedford wins prestigious title in 25th year

Showbus Premier Operator

By Mike Morgan

THE SMART TURNOUT of its drivers and fleet of second-hand small coaches won the prestigious title of Premier Operator at the 25th Showbus last weekend for Expresslines of Bedford.

Coincidentally 1997 is also the silver jubilee year for Expresslines, which was set up by the late Tony Spriggs. Now run by half-brothers Richard Harris and Chris Spriggs, the company has 28 vehicles, of which 12 are PSVs, and its work is split equally between schools, contracts and private hire.

Mr Spriggs said it was Expresslines' fourth appearance at the annual show for preserved and working vehicles. "We've always come away with a commendation but never a first - it was a complete surprise," he said.

However, the company's success was not restricted to the Premier award as it also lifted three other trophies - best small operator, best local operator and best 90's minibus, making it a clean sweep for the five vehicles on display.

Newest in the fleet is a 1991 16-seater, one of Expresslines' favoured Ford Transits, and the largest is a 37-seat Reeve Burgess-bodied Leyland Swift. "All the vehicles in the fleet are capable of doing all types of work and we find the Transit is the only 16-seater suitable for this role."

Vehicles are refurbished by the company, including the two 16-seat Transits at Showbus, which had new seatbelt-fitted M2 seats. Repaints are in a white-based scheme using burgundy stripes and silver skirt panels. Staff wear matching uniforms.

Mr Spriggs said: "We believe in keeping the vehicles in tip-tip condition, treating them more like cars than coaches and we hope their presentation reflects the company." Expresslines will be using the Premier Operator accolade to further promote its standards.

Invite from Epsom

'DRIVE A BUS WITH US' was the invitation from Epsom Coaches to the thousands of visitors to the Imperial War Museum's Duxford site for this year's Showbus as the winner of Overall Coach Operator of the Year 1996/7 continued its head-on challenge to the growing nation-wide PCV driver shortage.

Among the line-up of Dennis Darts from the Epsom Buses fleet was one specifically signposted as the Recruitment Bus with a warm welcome for potential bus drivers who always fancied getting behind the wheel but didn't know where to start.

The initiative follows recruitment clinics held earlier this year at the company's headquarters. These open days were used by operations director, Steve Whiteway, and his team as the first stage in an informal selection procedure.

Epsom starts a new London Transport route from Sutton to Wallington on 15 November which requires half-a-dozen drivers and despite staff turnover down to 5% Mr Whitehead says it continues with its recruitment drive to "sort the wheat from the chaff."

"The big advantage," says James Prince of Epsom, "is that we are able to observe all the applicants at close quarters in a more relaxed atmosphere than one would in a normal interview situation. Once applications are received, these were sifted through using notes made at the seminar and we interviewed only those we knew would be an asset to the company.

"Quite simply, it worked. Although a few have left since, the vast majority of the drivers taken on as a direct result of the seminar are still with us look set to stay."

FirstBus Renown won approval of the judges

Scania top working bus

TOP WORKING BUS at this year's Showbus is a Greater Manchester Scania L113 lowfloor built to the new FirstBus standard.

The Scania is the first of 21 to join the Greater Manchester fleet and is the first production Wrights Renown with Floline ramped floor. It also introduces a new ivory livery with passion blue flash and, in common with all new buses for FirstBus, it sports a new-look interior with aqua green and dark purple Scanflex seats trimmed in matching Holdsworth moquette.

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Another superior vehicle, from Optare, as usual.

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Worries that 'experiment' could have contributed to M6 death crash

er coach crash leaves M6 like a war zone

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seriously — Palace was

n their way to 3 seater coach a mile south of he scene was ds of walking nded.

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driver of the 28 ton Atkinson lorry, Baxter, from Ley- Lancashire, in his was cut free from

was taken to Walsall Hospital by police ter with a paramedic rd.

injuries are thought serious.

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air ambulances and and ambulances were to the accident, which ned on the south- carriageway at

UTIVE TRAVEL

FLASHBACK: M6 crash prompted renewed campaign

Pressure mounts to end third-lane ban

By Mike Morgan

PENT-UP FRUSTRATION among coach operators and their drivers struggling against the contentious outside lane ban has boiled over in the wake of the fatal accident on the M6 involving passengers on their way to Buckingham Palace.

Brian Leese, owner of G&B Travel of Crewe, is leading a call for an end to the two-year trial which prohibits coaches from using the outside lane of motorways with more than two lanes and, urging the Government to review the experiment, the Confederation of Passenger Transport is concerned that the ban could have contributed to the accident.

G&B's 1988 Volvo/Van Hool was stationery in traffic about a mile south of junction 12 at Gailey, near Cannock. The passengers, mostly pensioners, were on their way to pay tribute to the Princess of Wales when the coach was struck from behind by a lorry. Nearly 50 people were injured - seven seriously. Subsequently two died and three seriously hurt were still in hospital a week later. The coach driver of 25 years experience, Alan Griffin, suffered shock and in the wake of the trauma had to be coaxed back behind the wheel of a coach.

Mr Leese, who is struggling to come to terms with the aftermath of the accident, explained that it was the first time in the 15-year history since he and his wife, Gill, started the business that anything serious had happened. He said: "I looked at my coach and I couldn't believe it. There was nothing there.

"We've said all along that there would be more smashes on the motorway as a result of the ban and it is becoming a big problem. I know it is a two-year trial until January but, hopefully, it will end before that."

Given the new Government's positive stance on public transport, Mr Leese is hopeful that it will listen to the arguments.

CPT operations director, Steven Salmon, said: "We are particularly concerned because we believe the previous Government's experimental ban on coaches using the third laneof the motorway could have contributed to the accident.

"Lorries and coaches are currently restricted on lanes one and two: if coaches (whose engines are regulated to a higher speed than lorries) were allowed to use lane three as well, the scope for collisions of the kind we saw would be significantly reduced. We very much hope that new ministers will consider this when they review the experimental ban and will be working hard to ensure that they do."

CPT is also angered at media reports which branded the M6 incident as a 'coach crash' when it was a lorry that crashed into the back of the G&B vehicle. BBC radio only changed its wording after a call from CPT.

HGV sandwich: will motorway trial finish at the end of the year?

Ducato bus conversion

ROHILL of Andover has introduced a bus conversion of a Fiat Ducato 2.5-litre turbodiesel chassis cab utilising its 'Lowline' tri-axle galvanised chassis. The 'RoMoBus' has Drinkwater lowering air suspension at the rear and is aimed at the growing mobility market.

Uprated to a gross vehicle weight of 4,250 kg, the prototype has six fixed and six removable passenger seats with three-point seatbelts, and space for fixing two wheelchairs at the rear.

A luggage pen replaces the standard front passenger seat. The one-piece GRP front section retains the original Ducato outline and lights, wings, windscreen and bumper.

The one-piece GRP rear section incorporates quarter doors enclosing a folding ramp. The body is of lightweight steel box section with an aluminium skin, a plug door on the nearside enclosing a stepwell with two steps.

Interior heating is provided by an Eberspacher D3L unit, and a first-aid box and fire extinguisher are among the standard fittings.

Wheelchair-accessible RoMoBus tri-axle is based on the 2.5-litre Fiat Ducato

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DAF DHTD PLAXTON 3200 (LOW DRIVER)
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DAF DHSB VAN HOOL ALIZEE
First Registered: 08.05.90. MOT: 28.06.98.
ZF 6 speed splitter, 51 recliners, seat belts, radio/pa/cassette, monitor/video, centre continental, toilet, servery, double glazing, curtains, brown/orange moquette, white exterior.

DAF DHSB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE
First Registered: 01.04.90. MOT: 15.11.97.
ZF 7 speed, 49 recliners + courier, radio/pa/cassette, monitor/video, double glazing, centre continental, toilet, drinks, drivers bunk, white/blue exterior.

DAF DHTD PLAXTON PARAMOUNT (LOW DRIVER)
First Registered: 01.02.92. MOT: 01.08.98.
ZF 6 speed splitter, 53 reclining seats, power door, radio/pa/cassette, livery white/yellow/brown.

DAF SB3000 VAN HOOL ALIZEE
First Registered: 01.05.92. MOT: 03.02.98.
Manual gearbox, 49/51 de-mountable seats, radio/pa/cassette, toilet, curtains, double glazed, power door, patterned moquette, white exterior.

DENNIS GX 290 PLAXTON PREMIERE
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LEYLAND ROYAL TIGER PLAXTON 3500
First Registered: 01.10.83. MOT: 06.01.98
48 reclining seats, double glazed, centre continental door, power door, toilet, radio/speech/pa system, livery maroon and cream.

MAN JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE
First Registered: 01.05.91. MOT: 11.02.97
51 reclining seats, manual gearbox, double glazed, centre continental door, plug power door, c/s/t toilet, radio/speech/pa, exterior painted white.

SCANIA K112 PLAXTON
First Registered: 01.08.83. MOT: 10.10.97
5 speed with retarder, 49 recliners + courier, seat belts, radio/pa/cassette, double glazed, continental door, toilet, drivers bunk, power door, patterned moquette, yellow with pattern exterior.

SCANIA K93CR PLAXTON PREMIER 3200
First Registered: Feb 1992. MOT: Dec 1997-Feb 1998
ZF automatic with integral retarder, ABS, air suspension with front kneel facility and ferry lift, 53 recliners, seat belts, radio/pa/cassette, 1/2 rear emergency exit, double glazed, blinds/curtains, centre gangway carpet, parallel opening lockers, choice of brown or grey moquette, exterior repainted white. **Choice of 5.**

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49 Setra reclining seats, demountable WC with two pairs of seats (factory fitted), front fridge, water boiler (cupboard mounted inside of WC), Blaupunkt stereo/radio/PA/video system + 16" TV front mounted (factory fitted), ABS/Voith retarder, loose lap belts (Selvron), Webasto timer, new ZF diff recently fitted, new radiator/water boiler 96, new propshaft 95 (Dec), retrimmed seats/racks/wc 95 in Graffiti brown & burgundy curtains, carpet.

215HR RATIONAL SETRA STANDARD
First Registered: 1987 MOT 23.01.98
53 Setra reclining seats, front fridge, Blaupunkt stereo/pa, ABS, loose lap type seat belts, Webasto & timer, new exhaust, retrimmed in brown Graffiti and new carpet, good tyres, straight panels.

SETRA TORNADO 215 HD (MAN)
First registered: 01.04.92. MOT: 10.02.98
ZF 7 speed, Voith, Webasto, 49 recliners + courier, radio/pa/cassette, monitors/video, Sütrak air-conditioning, centre continental, sunken, servery, water boiler, fridge, drivers bunk, drivers door with wardrobe, central locking, re-moquetted, exterior repainted white.

VOLVO B10M MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE (H)
First Registered: Jan/Feb 1991. MOT: Dec 1997-Feb 1998
ZF 6 speed, Telma, Webasto, ABS, 49 recliners + courier, seat belts, radio/pa/cassette, 1/2 rear emergency exit, centre continental, mounted toilet, servery crew compartment, double glazed side bays, brown moquette, exterior repainted white.

VOLVO B10M MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE
First Registered: 09.01.92. MOT: 07.01.98
ZF 6 speed, ABS, Webasto, air suspension, 49 recliners + courier, radio/pa/cassette, 1/2 rear emergency exit, centre continental, mounted toilet, centre servery, crew compartment, split front screen, double glazed side bays, brown moquette, exterior repainted white.

VOLVO B10M MKIII VAN HOOL ALIZEE
First Registered: 26.03.96. MOT: 12.03.98
ZF 6 speed, Telma, Webasto, ferry lift, 44 recliners + courier, seat belts, seat back tables, footrests, nets, head rest covers, radio/pa/cassette, monitors/video, air-conditioning, double glazing, curtains, burglar alarm, aircraft lockers, table with lamp, continental door, toilet, servery, fridge, water boiler, drivers bunk, on-board phone, grey moquette, red/black exterior.

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Leyland National, hydrocylic, 43 seats
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Peter Johnson receives his TV Husk draw prize

JC Coaches driver wins Euro-TV prize

PETER JOHNSON, driver for JC Coaches, Darlington, has won a colour TV for his coach in Husk UK's free prize draw. He was filling up his Bova Futura FHD at Husk's Dover site for the return trip to Darlington when he found out about his good fortune.

JC Coaches is a regular Husk UK customer as the company uses one of a number of fuel cards accepted at the site. The company operates a shuttle service to Spain for Siesta Travel based in Middlesbrough.

Mr Johnson plans to take the TV on his trips abroad so he can still watch his favourite programmes.

Meanwhile, Husk promises more free draws before the end of the year. Drivers receive one raffle ticket for every 200 litres of fuel drawn.

Hutchison general manager's warning

Attacks may create bus no-go areas

By Ian Martin

HOUSING schemes could become no-go areas for buses if they continue to be subjected to potentially life-threatening attacks.

The claim is made by Ian Kirkpatrick, general manager of Wishaw-based Hutchison Coaches, after a teenager stepped into the road on a Craigneuk, Strathclyde, estate and aimed a brick at the driver.

The vehicle, with upwards of a dozen passengers , was brought safely to a halt but Mr Kirkpatrick said: "If the driver had lost control, who knows what might have happened?"

Attacks generally happen in the housing schemes and are costing the company an average of five side windows a week, according to Mr Kirkpatrick, who has now joined with Strathclyde Police in publicising the problem across the Scottish media.

A commercial decision may ultimately be needed to bypass estates where serious incidents occur regularly, he says.

Hutchison: having to replace five windows per week

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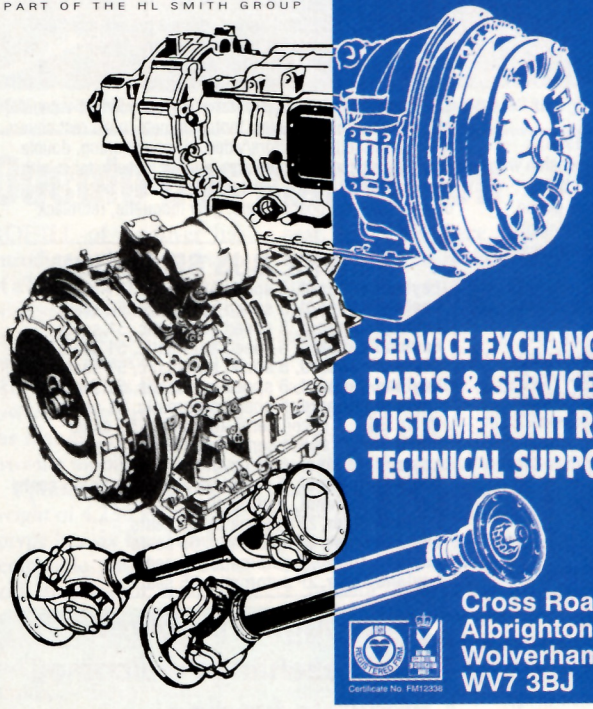

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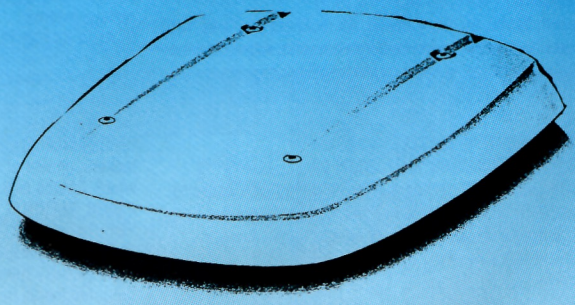

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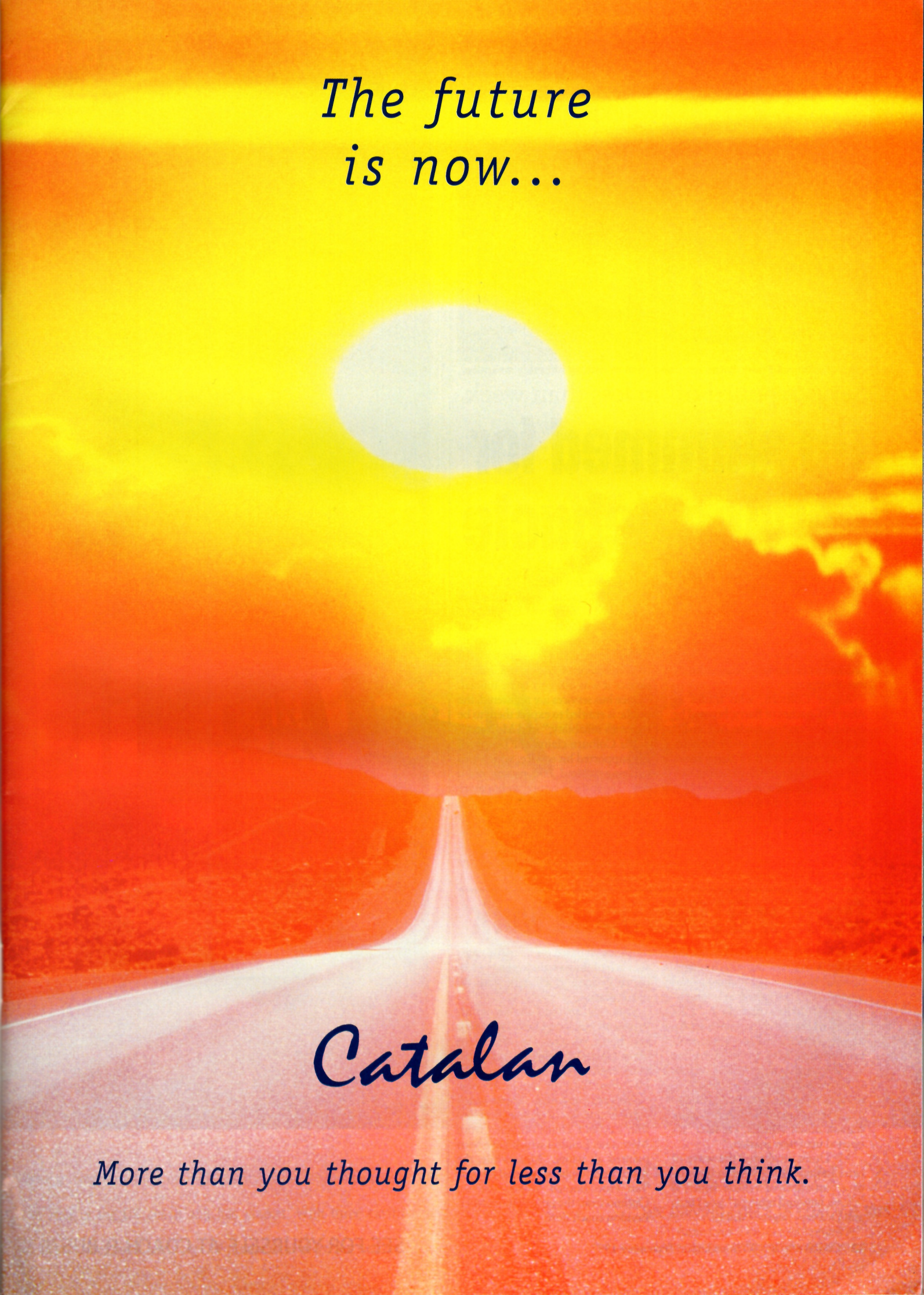
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Cardiff Bus: md Frank Yates accused rival of hitting industry's repute

Service pulled off in less than week

Op slammed for service debacle

By Michael Jewell

A SOUTH WALES operator who pulled off a registered local bus service in less than a week, blaming a shortage of PCV drivers, has been accused of bringing the bus industry into disrepute.

Alister Colburn, who trades as Alister's Coaches of Barry, boasted he could take on the might of Cardiff Bus in a bus war with lower fares on the lucrative Cardiff to Barry route but lasted just four days on the service. He claimed a lack of drivers led him to suspend the service.

Mr Colburn, who mainly operates mini-coaches, says he was let down on the driving front and had to drive the vehicle on the service himself but was unable to continue both running his business and drive.

Cardiff Bus md Frank Yates has accused Mr Colburn of bringing the bus industry into disrepute. He said there would be an outcry if Cardiff Bus failed to run services but with the rival operator offering a one-hourly service it was unlikely to be missed. "Once bus services are registered, the public is entitled to expect them to be run with reliability," said Mr Yates.

Mr Colburn claims the people of Ely supported his service, which was carrying around 200 passengers a day. He vows to return with a more frequent service and has placed advertisements in the local press for PCV drivers. Meanwhile, he continues with his circular bus service in Barry, which is not affected by the decision.

Decker B10Ms boost work

DUNN-LINE OF NOTTINGHAM has generated new business by refurbishing Volvo B10M chassis and having them rebodied as seatbelt-equipped double deckers by East Lancs, whereas the company's intake of new vehicles includes more conventional deckers from Metroline and five coaches from MTL London.

Managing director Bob Dunn said the success of the first three rebodies had encouraged a search for more suitable donor vehicles. He said: "It's opened up a new market."

Mr Dunn attributed the wave of extra inquiries to a winning formula of a cost-effective vehicle which is "clean, new and modern" (see Deals and Dealers - pages 30&31).

Although based on 12-metre chassis, each of the new deckers has 11.8-metre Pyoneer bodywork with 80 coach seats.

One has an auto-chassis which previously carried a Duple Dominant bus body, whereas the other two have manual gearboxes, reflecting their earlier role as coaches with Dominant III or Berkhof bodywork.

Deckers updating Dunn-Line's schools and local service fleet are four Leyland Titans obtained from Metroline, London which have been painted all white. Meanwhile, the coach fleet has been boosted by four Van Hool-bodied Volvos and an Optimo from the now defunct MTL London coach fleet.

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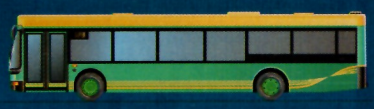

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All panelling is Cromweld stainless

CROMWELD'S stainless steel is now used for all panelling in Plaxton's coach products.

On the Prima, the susceptible side panels are now stretched, Cromweld stainless, but under the floor in the locker walls. The new feature has been added over the last three to four months, but no formal announcement was made until Plaxton was confident it had the quality it wanted.

The stainless underframes are also used on bus products, production of which is undergoing a transformation so that Plaxton and sister company Northern Counties can increase total production.

All single-deck buses are now being built in Scarborough, leaving Northern Counties' Wigan plant solely building double-decks. The Northern Counties name consequently disappears from all single-deck products. The last of the high-floor Paladins are now being finished, and all lowfloor Paladins - built on DAF SB220L - change name to Prestige.

Plaxton has also invested in a state-of-the-art computer-aided design package for its development team. The new software allows engineers to view components in 3D from any angle and at any magnification, and assemble them on screen to check fit.

First impressions of Plaxton's new coach based on Volvo

It's a Prima facie case

By Mark Williams

PLAXTON has launched its rear-engined, low-cost Prima coach with Volvo's Javelin challenger, the B7R.

Based on the Premiere 320, the Prima is designed as a dual-role coach, configurable for inter-urban express services but adaptable for domestic touring and excursion work. First off the line will be 'rigid' full-chassis vehicles in January, with the cut-chassis version, offering more luggage space, available in Spring.

Prima is the first B7R product available in the UK. The new, Swedish-built chassis (*CBW*, 15 March) uses an amalgam of existing Volvo components built on to a ladder frame. It has the D7, six-cylinder 260bhp engine used in FL7 trucks mounted at the rear, B10M MkII front suspension, and an air-suspended Volvo FL7/10 truck axle at the rear.

Brakes are S-cams straight from the B10M, and the choice of ZF S6-85 manual or ZF 4HP500 automatic gearboxes will be familiar to operators. A Telma retarder is standard on the manual version, and variety of axle ratios will be available for specialist applications.

"Adopting a standard specification and simplifying some of the interior trim, such as the luggage racks, has enabled us to pitch the vehicle at a very attractive price - well below the current Premiere 320 body on B10M," said Plaxton coach sales manager Kevin Wood.

The bodywork is recognisably from the Premiere base, using a jig-built frame corrosion-protected with the Mebon Coachprime process. Panelwork is GRP and stainless (see story, this page) and the coach comes double-glazed. At the standard price, Plaxton is offering a two-color paint scheme and 55 seats.

The interior shows most of the savings, from the pivot passenger door onwards. The entrance and gangway floors covered in durable rubber, and the seat space covered in Lino. The soft trim is all ribbed cord, the seats Plaxton's own recliners with inertia reel lap belts. The driver gets a Chapman seat with three-point belt.

The 'baby' Volvo will have particular appeal to current Plaxton B10M owners looking for a middle-market vehicle - in the past, buyers of Dennis' 245bhp Javelin chassis. But Plaxton

Chassied version, with low luggage

Recognisably Premiere but called Prima on Volvo B7R

Interior is spartan but businesslike. Cab is standard Volvo (inset)

Javelin challenger, the B7R

capacity, is to be supplemented by space-framed Prima in the Spring

says its concern is to offer choice, and says its relationship with Dennis remains the same: "We are a coach builder, Dennis is a chassis manufacturer," said sales and marketing director David Quainton.

Mr Quainton was also anxious to underline that the Prima is essentially a one-specification, ex-stock coach. Factory-fit extras such as air conditioning would be available, but the operator would lose some of the economies of scale. Yeates and Kirkby will be handling sales of the Prima, and at a shade under £130,000, Plaxton and Volvo are expecting to sell up to 150 units during 1998.

"The Prima B7R has been developed jointly by Plaxton and Volvo to meet the growing requirement for a keenly-priced, high-quality coach aimed specifically at private hire and the growing commuter sector," said Volvo Bus md Mike Ball.

Rear-engined Volvo costs a shade under £130,000

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Northampton door-to-door

A MINIBUS SERVICE for people in Northampton who have difficulty using existing buses takes to the road next Monday.

Northampton Door to Door Service (NDDS) uses a Ford Transit minibus with wheelchair lift to provide a service, taking passengers from their homes to any destination in the Borough of Northampton.

NDDS serves each of five zones on a weekly rota. Potential customers must pay a £3 annual registration fee and fares are 60p single within their zone or £1 single outside the zone.

Registered as a charity, Northampton Door to Door Service is supported by Northampton Borough Council, Northampton County Council, Barclays Bank, Age Concern, SERCo, Northamptonshire Council for the Disabled and The Mayor of Northampton's Appeal 1996/7.

Local authorities hamstrung by rules, claims report

Quality Partnerships snag

By Mike Morgan

THE QUALITY PARTNERSHIP route to improved local bus services is hampered by rules which stop local authorities from putting their full weight behind schemes to boost bus ridership.

In a report on the successes and failures of quality partnership initiatives over the last five years, public transport consultant TAS recommends deregulation of local authority dealings with the bus industry rather than regulation of the industry itself.

With the best quality partnerships increasing bus ridership by over 40 per cent and the least successful just 5%, the survey discovered the measures worked well for 42% of authorities and 58% of bus operators. But 44% of authorities and 20% of operators believe progress has been retarded by the absence of "clear guidance and rules" from Government.

Success is determined by investment in infrastructure

Bus ops experienced:

- Abstraction by low quality competition - 77%
- Restrictions on local authority funds - 58%
- Problems getting traffic priority - 29%

The main problem for local authorities was the lack of formal structure or commitment with finance and low quality competition rated as drawbacks in more than a third of cases.

Authorities and operators expressed doubts about the legality or enforceability of quality partnerships.

Passenger growth achieved by existing schemes varied from around 5% to more than 40%. Success was determined by investment in infrastructure - bus stops, shelters, traffic light priority, etc.

The report's author, Peter Huntley, concludes that local authorities need to be freed from existing legislation so that they could negotiate a package with operators which included appropriate levels of fares subvention, service levels, network ticketing, quality thresholds, bus priority and promotion.

■ *Quality Partnerships in the Bus Industry: A Survey and Review is being distributed free to participants of the TAS Bus in a New Era conference and is otherwise available, price £17.50, from TAS on 01772 204988.*

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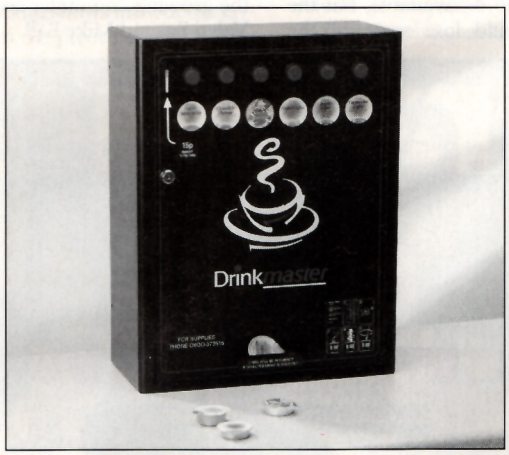

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Chairman: John Johnson

CTC changes are ratified

THE restructuring of the Coach Tourism Council (CTC) was ratified at the September board meeting when David Fenton and John Johnson were endorsed as new chief executive and chairman. Mr Fenton's role will include the co-ordination of the five CTC working groups and he also will cover the areas of membership, public relations and finance.

Mr Johnson said: "This is a new and exciting time for the CTC. The newly-introduced role of the chief executive will mean that the council will be more co-ordinated and successful in its aim to promote travel and tourism by coach."

For the first time in its history, the CTC will have two people in the role of vice-chairman - Jane Duffelen and Paul Cresswell. Former membership secretary, Graham Fry, becomes finance officer.

New man at Glider helm

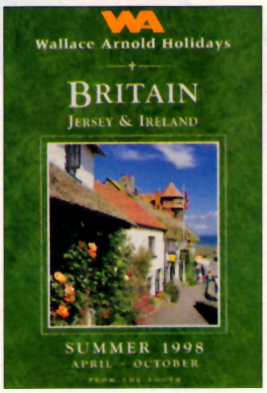
ALBERTO Boeri has joined Q Drive Holdings as the new general manager of all travel products operated by the group of companies.

He will be primarily responsible for the development and management of Cirrus Travel's new programme of luxury coach holidays to the UK and Europe. This was launched in September 1996 under The Glider brand name and the 1998 programme will feature a number of new destinations in the UK and Europe.

Mr Boeri is a former director of product development at Cosmos Coach Tours.

Holiday coach giants fire the first shots in the battle to be

Record sales boost as



By William Golden

FIFTY new destinations are included in the 300-plus 1998 programme of British and European tours from Wallace Arnold, the Leeds-based holiday coach operator.

Wallace Arnold has launched the programme three weeks earlier than last year on the back of what it has claimed is a record year, with sales running at 20% above 1996 levels. Ken Meddes, group md of the new Wallace Arnold Group, said: "The results are particularly gratifying when you bear in mind that the last year has seen us fight off rival bids for the group and achieve a successful management buyout during what was a prime booking period."

He added that, despite the distractions, the company had successfully launched its complete Summer 1998 holiday programmes early and well ahead of the competition.

The British programme features for the first time a 16-day Grand tour of Britain for £739 per person and a 15-day tour of theFour Countries, which takes in England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales. The cost of this tour is £759 per person.

Also new is an eight-day coach and rail Hebridean

Ferry merger may finally get green light

THERE seemed to be positive signs this week that the Government was finally coming round to making a decision on the proposed merger on the short-sea Channel crossings between P&O European Ferries and Stena Line.

Margaret Beckett, the President of the Board of Trade, indicated that there was no reason to delay any decision beyond the beginning of October (*CBW*, 9 August). Under the proposal, which was first announced nearly a year ago, P&O and Stena will operate a joint venture on the Dover-Calais and Newhaven-Dieppe routes. It will result in substantial savings for both operators and lead to hundreds of job losses.

Part of the reason for the delay has been concerns expressed that the merger would give the new company, P&O Stena Line, and Le Shuttle a duopoly but Lord Sterling, P&O chairman, has rejected this, saying other competitors such as SeaFrance remained in the market.

Lord Sterling did say that he was prepared to accept a price cap on Channel fares as a condition of merger approval, but he also warned that, if the merger was blocked, P&O would go ahead with alternative arrangements.

The latest flurry of speculation came as P&O announced a jump in operating profits on the ferries from £550,000 to £11.3 million, thanks to a marked increase in freight traffic. This was a result of the fire in the Channel Tunnel last November, which meant freight was unable to travel through it until June.

● Latest coach traffic figures from the Port of Dover have confirmed that Le Shuttle has recaptured the share of the market it enjoyed before last November's fire.

Figures just released showed that 6,150 coaches travelled through the Channel Tunnel in August, giving Le Shuttle 28.4% of market share, nearly three per cent up on July carryings. There was a corresponding dip in traffic through Dover, which carried 15,420 coaches.

Traffic volume figures for the first eight months of the year showed that Dover and Le Shuttle had virtually the same market share as in the same period last year. Dover has carried 111,937 coaches, giving it 75.1% of the market, and Le Shuttle has captured 24.3% by carrying 36,131 vehicles.

Short-sea coach traffic

August 1997

	Coaches	Market Share	+/- July 1997
Dover	15,420	71.1%	-2.8%
Ramsgate	107	0.5%	0.0%
Le Shuttle	6,150	28.4%	+2.8%

January to August 1997

	Coaches	Market Share	+/- January to August 1996
Dover	111,937	75.1%	-0.7%
Ramsgate	885	0.6%	0.0%
Le Shuttle	36,131	24.3%	+0.7%

Port of call: Dover is still keeping the lion's share of cross-Channel coach business

the market leader in an increasingly-competitive tourism sector

WA unveils 1998 brochures

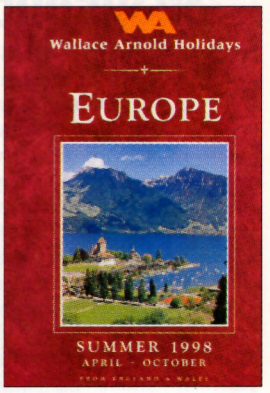
Adventure, for £499, and Wallace Arnold's widest selection of eight-day holidays by air to Jersey start from £289. The Ireland programme includes an eight-day air and coach Shamrock Holiday from £525.

Tours of Wales include Snowdonia's Lakes and Mountains, a five-day excursion from £189, and the five-day Scenic Welsh Seascapes from £209. Back in England, a five-day Durham and Beamish Nostalgia tour costs £245, while a five-day tour of Floral North Devon costs £235.

New tours in the European programme include an eight-day air and coach holiday to the Venetian Riviera, Austria and Switzerland for £575; a 14-day tour of the Historical Highlights of Poland for £675; and a 12-day holiday in Budapest, Prague and Vienna from £499. Other options include a seven-day break to the Romantic Rhineland from £289; a 15-day Grand Tour of Spain from £699; and a nine-day break to Lake Annecy and the French Alps from £469.

Wallace Arnold has extended its cruise programme by including two 15-day holidays each taking in more than six countries. They are Baltic Treasures and Fjord Fantasia and are priced at £799. Travel is on board the luxury cruise ship, Flamenco.

The company is again offering its Total Luggage Handling Service, which was successfully introduced last year. It means passengers do not have to carry heavy bags from joining point to the hotel room, except for security requirements at airports. All holidays are on a half-board basis and there are no single room supplements on UK mainland holidays.



Strategy: Leisureplus chief executive John Slatcher

Shearings joins hotel top ten

SHEARINGS Holidays has underlined its commitment to developing as an integrated holiday operator by purchasing a further three hotels in a £7 million deal.

The acquisitions by Leisureplus, Shearings' holding company, brings the number of properties in Shearings' Coast and Country Hotels portfolio to 37, making it one of the UK's top ten hotel companies.

It is line with Shearings' strategy to develop its reputation and capability as an integrated holiday operator for the over-50 age group. Further hotel purchases are planned as the company develops its coach holiday and hotel leisure-break businesses. In the past year alone, Shearings has introduced fly/drive holidays to the United States and a new cruise brochure.

The three hotels bought from Mount Charlotte Thistle Hotels are the 57-room Portpatrick Hotel, near Stranraer, in Northern Ireland; the 59-room Abernant Lake, in Llanwrytd Wells; and the 72-room Valley of Rocks, in Lynton, Devon. The Portpatrick also has eight self-catering bungalows and three self-catering apartments, which will be incorporated into the self-drive programme.

Leisureplus has also announced the appointment of Michael Davies as chairman. Mr Davies is chairman of the National Express Group and a non-executive director at British Airways.

John Slatcher, chief executive of Leisureplus, said: "I am very happy to announce the latest phase of our acquisitions in the hotel market. We have purchased three excellent hotels which will fit comfortably into our portfolio.

"The acquisitions underline our position as one of the UK's leading leisure companies and demonstrate our commitment to the further growth of our holiday business for the expanding over-50 age group. This move, and our appointment of Michael Davies, means it is a period of real growth at Shearings."

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WEATHER

City	Average temperature last week	City	Average temperature last week
Amsterdam	19C/66F	Madrid	25C/77F
Athens	25C/77F	Oslo	13F/55F
Berlin	14C/57F	Paris	28C/82F
Brussels	24C/75F	Rome	27C/81F
Dublin	14C/57F	Stockholm	12C/54F
Lisbon	29C/84F	Vienna	19C/66F
Luxembourg	23C/73F	Zurich	20/68F

DIESEL PRICES

AA Out and About with AA Roadwatch

Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling	Country	Diesel price per litre in Sterling
Austria	0.47	Luxembourg	0.37
Belgium	0.48	Netherlands	0.47
Eire	0.52	Norway	0.63
France	0.45	Portugal	0.40
Germany	0.42	Spain	0.40
Greece	0.38	Sweden	0.54
Italy	0.54	Switzerland	0.53

HOLIDAY POUND

Country	Currency exchange rate	Country	Currency exchange rate
Austria	19.23 Sch/£	Italy	2,682 Lire/£
Belgium	56.56 BFr/£	Netherlands	3.079 Gld/£
Denmark	10.51 K/£	Norway	11.13 NKr/£
Eire	1.027Punt/£	Portugal	275.30 Es/£
France	9.168 F/£	Spain	230 Pta/£
Germany	2.742 DM/£	Sweden	11.76 SKr/£
Greece	436 D/£	Switzerland	2.266 SFr/£

For all your tourism and travel ideas see *Coach Tours & Excursions*.
If you are not receiving your copy call Jazz Walshe on 01733 467048

School bus op's O-licence suspended

LICENSING

SCHOOL BUS operator Stephen Heath's O-licence was suspended with immediate effect when he failed to appear at a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry. In July 1996 Mr Heath's - who trades as Omega Travel - bid for a licence in the Eastern Traffic Area was turned down by Eastern traffic commissioner Brigadier Compton Boyd because he was not satisfied about his maintenance arrangements or the explanations for two prohibition notices that had been imposed on Mr Heath's vehicles which had been marked as showing a significant maintenance failure.

Last December the existing licence Mr Heath holds in the West Midland Traffic Area was suspended until both his operational vehicles had passed fresh MoT tests.

West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh also cut the authorisation on the licence held by Mr Heath, of 26 Tower Road, Earl Shilton, Leicester, from four to two vehicles with an operating centre at 37 Watling Street, Warwickshire (CBW, 21December 211996). Once again suspending the licence, Mr Pugh said that, in December, Mr Heath had been given a serious warning about his future conduct in relation to the maintenance of his vehicles. The original suspension had been lifted on 23 December on receipt of fresh MoT test certificates. He had now received information from the Eastern Traffic Area that once again Mr Heath's vehicles were not in a satisfactory condition and that they were not being kept at their authorised operating centre.

The Vehicle Inspectorate had been unable to arrange to inspect the vehicles, said Mr Pugh. Letters sent by ordinary post and recorded delivery informing Mr Heath about the present proceedings had not been replied to. He considered the Traffic Area Office had done everything in its power to contact Mr Heath, as indeed had the Vehicle Inspectorate, said Mr Pugh.

He said he was unlikely to lift the suspension of Mr Heath's licence until his vehicles had been made available to the Vehicle Inspectorate.

If Mr Heath's vehicles were found to be in an unsatisfactory condition, revocation of the licence and the disqualification of Mr Heath from holding or obtaining a licence would be the only course open to him, warned the commissioner.

Parks of Hamilton

Op pleads guilty to using a coach when the driver was

DRIVERS' HOURS

AN absolute discharge was given to Parks of Hamilton (Coach Hirers) Ltd by St Helens Magistrates after the company pleaded guilty to using a coach when the driver was unable to produce a tachograph chart for the last day of the previous week in which he worked.

The magistrates made no order for costs against the company, of 20 Bothwell Road, Hamilton, Lanarkshire. The driver, John Graham Fyvie, of 33 Murray Place, Dollar, Clackmananshire, had been fined £80 for a similar offence, and ordered to pay £55 prosecution costs, at an earlier hearing.

Prosecuting for the Vehicle Inspectorate, John Heaton said a coach driven by Mr Fyvie was seen in the coach park at Haydock Park Race Course. Mr Fyvie had been unable to produce the tachograph chart for the last day on which he had driven the previous week.

Asked why he was unable to produce the chart, Mr Fyvie had said he had left it in his car. He had also said that the company had not explained the tachograph regulations to him in respect of what charts he needed to keep with him and be able to produce when requested.

However, Mr Fyvie had since written a letter saying he had answered that question incorrectly. Maintaining the decision to prosecute Parks had been a proper one, Mr Heaton said VI policy was only to prosecute operators for this type of offence where it was thought some blame was attached to the operator.

Following what Mr Fyvie had said to the traffic examiner it appeared this was a case of a driver who had not received proper instructions from his company. The court had to consider what weight it should attach to a letter now supplied by the driver saying he had answered that question in a completely opposite way to what he was now maintaining.

The purpose of the tachograph regulations was road safety, so that tired drivers were not behind the wheel of coaches carrying passengers, said Mr Heaton. It was important that proper records were made and kept so it could be seen whether drivers were complying with the limits on driving hours and that they were taking the required amount of rest.

It was, therefore, important that a driver had his current tacho charts to hand so that he himself, his employer and, as in this case, the enforcement authorities, could inspect them. A failure to do that meant the driver was not fully equipped, which was the purpose of the regulation concerned. The prosecution accepted there was a chart in this case, said Mr Heaton. When it was eventually produced no hours offences were revealed. Defending, John Backhouse said that what the driver had said when he was interviewed by the traffic examiner in the absence of the company was not evidence against the company.

The driver, who had been properly instructed, had left the chart in his car, said Mr Backhouse

Moreover, the company had not been asked about the supervision of the driver during the follow-up inquiry by a traffic examiner in Scotland. Subsequently, the company's solicitors in Glasgow had written to the Vehicle Inspectorate, enclosing a letter from the driver setting out the position that he had made a mistake.

That letter read: "As I have been charged with a tacho offence, I would like to say that one of the questions that I have answered has been answered incorrectly. The question which refers to the employer informing me of the tacho regulations. I have answered no to this question when in actual fact my answer is yes. Parks of Hamilton did inform me of the regulations of tachographs when I started employment with this company. I have only realised this after reading through my statement I gave to the examiner. I can only say that, due to being cautioned by the examiner, I did not understand the contents of the whole question....."

The fact was there was a chart in existence, said Mr Backhouse, but Mr Fyvie had left it in his car. His coach was checked on a Saturday and the last chart he had was for the previous Saturday. The driver had, therefore, had a full week's rest between the two driving periods. Consequently, the need to see the chart in this particular case was academic because it would not have disclosed anything amiss.

The purpose behind the regulation, therefore, never arose. It was clear from the High Court's judgment in the case of Birkett that it did not expect a company to be prosecuted for this offence unless it could be said to be culpable, said Mr Backhouse. In general terms, one did not punish a man who was not to blame, and he invited the magistrates to give the company an absolute discharge.

Parks thought it had done everything it could and the company had reluctantly pleaded guilty because this was an offence of absolute liability to

Exclusive Travel drops bid for more vehicles

MAINTENANCE

AN operator dropped his bid for additional vehicles at a Birmingham disciplinary inquiry because of concern over his maintenance record.

Michael James, trading as Exclusive Travel, of The Events Centre, 14 Felspar Road, Amington Industrial Estate, Tamworth, Staffordshire, had been called before West Midland traffic commissioner John Mervyn Pugh. Mr James was also seeking to change his operating centre. Withdrawing his application to increase the authorisation on his licence from two single deckers and two double deckers to seven single deckers and one double decker, Mr James said he no longer needed the extra licence discs.

Mr Pugh said it was quite clear that things had not been going well in relation to maintenance, particularly in regard to the paperwork. Asked whether he'd had his vehicles put through fresh MoT tests, as had been suggested in the letter calling him to the public inquiry, Mr James said he'd had difficulty in getting test dates and the first one that had been offered to him was still three weeks away.

He agreed he had not told the test station he was due to appear before the commissioner at a public inquiry, saying he had not known it would have made a difference. Mr Pugh said he had a duty to the public and to the passenger transport industry to ensure

given absolute discharge

unable to produce a tacho chart for last day of the previous week's work

Company reluctantly pleaded guilty because offence was one of absolute liability to which there was no defence, said John Backhouse

which there was no defence, said Mr Backhouse. It was a long-established company operating some 85 vehicles and there was no intention to contravene the regulations.

Mr Fyvie, although a part-time driver, was the son of another senior driver in the company. He had been interviewed by the traffic manager, Mr Wark, who was himself a retired police officer and who checked the tachograph charts. Mr Fyvie had attended an internal course dealing with the drivers' hours and tachograph regulations.

He had been interviewed by two people about his knowledge of the regulations, one of whom was specifically charged with instructing Mr Fyvie about the regulations. The driver, who had been properly instructed, had left the chart in his car, said Mr Backhouse. Therefore, the company could not have known of Mr Fyvie's breach of the regulations. He had been instructed not to breach them and the company had nothing to gain by this technical breach. In his view, the prosecution should in this case have exercised its discretion not to prosecute the company. Mr Heaton said the driver had made the plainest claim under interview that he had not received instruction.

If he was now going to say something different now he knew both he and the company were being prosecuted, the court should ask itself why that was and insist on hearing evidence to resolve that conflict.

Moreover, the driver was a competent witness for the prosecution against the company had it decided to plead not guilty. What the driver had to say about the company was, therefore, highly relevant. The magistrates said they felt an absolute discharge was appropriate in the circumstances.

on O-licence because of concerns over its maintenance

all PSVs were safe. They would be safe on the day that they passed an MoT test and, if that was followed up by the maintenance system recommended in the West Midlands, they should remain safe.

Mr James said he had followed the advice to require the seller of any vehicle he purchased to have it put through a fresh MoT test before he took delivery, as it showed the seller had nothing to hide. Mr Pugh said the problem was really the paperwork. Mileages had not been entered on the inspection records and neither had the fact defects had been rectified. Mr James said he did some of the inspections and others were undertaken by an experienced mechanic.

He had written letters to his drivers, pointing out their responsibilities, when he first started in business. However, he had fresh drivers now and he would issue similar letters to them. The drivers were on a daily nil defect reporting system which was incorporated in the waybill. The waybill had to be handed in every day as it also showed the takings.

Mr Pugh said he had noted that the two prohibition notices imposed on Mr James' vehicles were comparatively minor and Mr James said it was not acceptable to have prohibitions at all. However, he pointed out that in one case the damage had only just occurred to the vehicle, a fact noted on the prohibition by the vehicle examiner. He said he had offered to put it right there and then but the examiner had preferred to issue a prohibition so the vehicle would go through a test examination. Mr James said he was going to push more of the paperwork on to his brother, who was doing his accounts, as his brother was more clerically minded than he was. Taking no action other than to warn Mr James, and granting the change of operating centre, Mr Pugh said he must remember that the paperwork was his responsibility.

Are these non-working periods classed as breaks?

Q Please see enclosed copies of tachograph charts. At a VI roadside check the driver was told that, technically, an offence had been committed because the split daily rest was broken into too many portions.

I cannot see this as the driver had a total rest of more than the required 12 hours, with at least eight hours being the last rest and no more than two other periods making up the 12 hours. Is this inspector inferring that an offence can be committed by having too much rest? Surely all non-working periods that are surplus to the total needed to make up rest totals can be regarded as breaks for drivers' hours purposes?
AS, Lincolnshire

A The disc copies you sent show a driver starting work on day one at 1400 hrs and thus needing to have a complete daily rest before 1400 hrs on day two. In fact, he resumed work at 0800 hrs on day two, but had taken eight hours 30 minutes rest immediately prior to that (ie starting at 2330 hrs on day one). Earlier in that day three rest periods of more than one hour are recorded:
(a) one hour 30 minutes, from 1620 hrs to 1745 hrs;
(b) one hour, from 1750 hrs to 1850 hrs;
(c) and three hours, from 1855 hrs to 2155 hrs.

There is nothing in the hours regulations, or decisions of the European Court of Justice, to suggest that you cannot take into account any preceding rest periods that fall within the working day in calculating split daily rest. In this case the two latter periods total four hours and thus give a total split daily rest of 12 hours 30 minutes - half an hour more than necessary. As you infer, it cannot be an offence to have not worked during the first rest period of one hour 30 minutes, even though only two of these three shorter rest periods can comprise elements of the split daily rest.

The EU rest limits are minima and can, of course, be exceeded.

There is no reason why any surplus rest periods (ie, periods of longer than one hour when the driver can freely dispose of his time) should not be classified as breaks, but equally there is no good reason to do this.

They can simply be thought of as rest over and above the minimum requirements. It may be positively beneficial not regard it as breaks. In this particular instance, for example, as the last break was 8½ hours long and the combined split daily rest 12½ hours in total, the extra 30 minutes could count towards any compensation due for earlier reductions in daily rest.

In other circumstances the ability to utilise split daily rest to effect compensation can be even more valuable.

If, for example, a full 11-hour rest had been taken, but earlier in the day there had been one or two periods of rest that totalled four hours, the 11-hour period could be regarded as eight hours of split daily rest (with the earlier four making up the necessary 12 hours) to which three compensatory hours had been added.

Unless your driver had mis-understood what he was being told, it is rather worrying that your file may be marked as having had a warning issued as a result of an enforcement officer with an incorrect understanding of the hours regulations. I would advise you to take this up, in writing, with the Traffic Area Office and/or the Vehicle Inspectorate.

marksman

YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

Questions on coach and bus operation should be sent to: Marksman, c/o *Coach and Bus Week*, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS or fax 01733 467154
Marksman will answer more questions on 9 October 1997

What's the law on smoking by PSV drivers in vehicle?

Q Can you advise the law on smoking by PSV drivers? What would happen if there was an accident while the driver was lighting a cigarette? Would the operator be liable to be prosecuted? Would the insurers refuse to pay out? I have tried to ban smoking on my coaches but the biggest culprits breaking the ban are the drivers themselves.
BB, Greater Manchester

A A PSV driver may only smoke on or in a PSV - whether it is moving or stationary - if it is not available for the carriage of passengers and the person is not in a part of the vehicle which the operator has, by notice, prohibited smoking, or where the vehicle is hired as a whole and both the hirer and the operator have given their permission for the driver to smoke. In the event of non-compliance with this being a contributory cause of an accident it is possible that the driver could be charged with dangerous, careless or inconsiderate driving.

The likelihood of this happening and the risk of conviction would very much depend on the facts.

Although the small print of an insurance policy might appear to gave insurers the ability to duck out of any claim where the driver or owner of the vehicle had caused or permitted it to be used in an illegal manner, the chances of them not meeting third party claims are remote. Again, depending on the circumstances, there is a greater risk of them refuting claims from the driver and owner of the vehicle.

I would not care to speculate on the risk the owner would face of prosecution for, again, it would depend on how much he had acquiesced in the actions of his drivers. Indeed, rather than prosecution I would recommend you to be concerned for your O-licence. It is not unknown for Traffic Commissioners to give operators warnings where drivers are known to not be complying with this particular legislation.

In common-sense terms you cannot impose a no-smoking rule on passengers without total compliance by drivers. My advice would be to read them the riot act, make breaching this company rule a disciplinary matter - and then enforce it absolutely, without any wavering, at all times.

Should I take up the offer of this 'lucrative' TV work?

Q What would you do if you were offered the chance of lucrative work for television and film producing companies, providing a registration fee of £300 was paid in advance?
RY, Herts

A The cheque book would stay in the desk drawer and my wallet in my pocket. I know it is fashionable to be green, but not that green. I am perhaps in the privileged position of receiving press releases detailing companies wound up by the Department of Trade and Industry. A batch of them fall on my desk every 14 days or so. The common thread running through all of these fraudster companies is that they extracted money from gullible people under false pretences - and then vanished before delivering the promised service or product. I would never contemplate buying work in this way, not least of all because of the high risk of the work never materialising.

Will this holiday scheme satisfy EU requirements?

Q Some time ago you suggested a scheme, which I adopted, whereby employees do not have an entitlement to paid holidays measured in days. Instead they accumulate an earnings-related fund of credit which they can draw as holiday pay, but they can also have it on demand without actually taking a holiday. Do you think this will satisfy the minimum holiday requirements of the EU Social Chapter?
MG, Leicestershire

A Frankly, I do not know. None of us will until the lawyers get to work on it. The scheme to which you refer has served me well for many years and I am keeping my head down and hoping, when the EU legislation becomes applicable here, that it will be applied purposively rather than requiring a literal four weeks minimum paid holiday per employee. As you will be aware, workers in the transport industries (whatever that may be decided to mean) were not intended to be within scope of this EU proposal, but that exemption is now under threat and may, in any case, only apply to actual drivers. Like you, I have applied this scheme to all non-salaried employees and some do draw at least part of their accrued 'holiday' fund without actually taking a holiday. If push comes to shove, I suspect such a scheme need not be abandoned, but restricted so that payments will only be made against actual days of holiday.

FREE HELP

Readers can obtain photocopies of the 1997 Marksman Costing Tables from *Coach and Bus Week* by calling Lisa Wilson on 01733 467157 or by fax on 01733 567153

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44/46 recliners, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, TV monitor/wired video, seat belts, servery with double fridge, water boiler, sink, microwave oven, coffee machine power entrance door, Webasto, finished white/red/yellow. **M.O.T. AUGUST 1998**

1991 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49/53 recliners, grey/orange moquette, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, blinds, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white. **M.O.T. OCTOBER 1997**

1989 (August) DAF DKFL VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

51 recliners, brown/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water bolier, wired TV/video, finished white/blue.
M.O.T. FEBRUARY 1998

1989 SCANIA K113 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, aircraft style lockers to hatracks, water boiler, fridge, wired TV/video, TELMA retarder, finished all white.
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M.O.T. APRIL 1998

1989 DAF SB2300 VAN HOOL ALIZEE-DH 12M

51 recliners, grey/red moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, twin TV monitors/wired video, power entrance door, low driving position, finished blue/red/gold.
M.O.T. MARCH 1998

1989 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, red/grey/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. JULY 1998

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 260 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500 12M

49 recliners, red/grey moquette, sunken toilet, O/S rear, continental door, double glazed side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished cream/grey.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

1988 DAF SB3000 JONCKHEERE JUBILEE P599 12M

51 Vogel recliners, grey/red/blue moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, fridge, wired TV/video, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. MAY 1998

1987 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE-H 12M

49 recliners, brown/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, double glazed tinted side windows with blinds, courier seat, water boiler, fridge, TELMA retarder, power entrance door, finished grey/red.
M.O.T. JANUARY 1998

1985 VOLVO B10M BERKHOF ESPRITE 12M

49 recliners, brown/orange moquette, centre sunken toilet, continental door, tinted side windows, curtains, courier seat, water boiler, power entrance door, finished all white.
M.O.T. JUNE 1998

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DIARY

Jane's the star

OUR 'Rogues Gallery' Kirkby Superdealer sales team quiz (*CBW*, 11 September) has been won by Jane Bostock.

The tours manager from Bostock's of Congleton correctly identified all 14 Kirkby salesmen of the seventies, and was unique in doing so, although we did throw open the competition to the coach sales industry.

Our famed *Coach and Bus Week* mug is winging its way to Ms Bostock as we write.

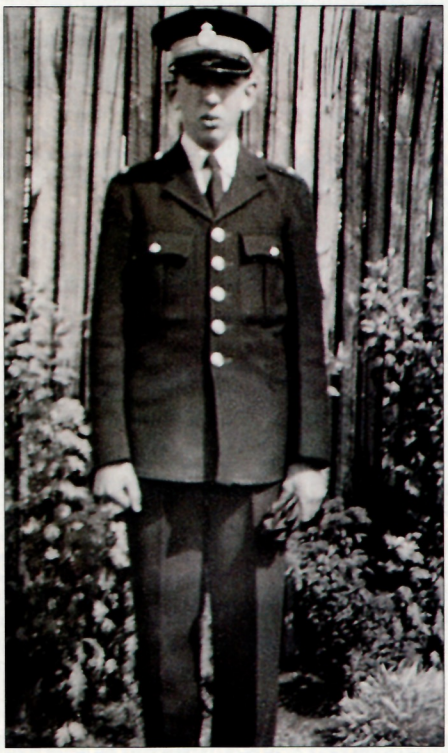
The salesmen were:

1) Clive Lambert-Beeson
2) John Torr
3) Malcolm Appleyard
4) Willy Wells
5) David Gabriel
6) John Hedges
7) Jeff Ottey
8) Melvyn McGrath
9) Philip Illingworth
10) Dan Perks
11) Eddie Marshall
12) Bill Clark
13) Frank Bloom
14) Alan Smiles

Life begins at...er...60

WE hear through the grapevine that the flamboyant Stuart Johnson has completed his three-score years, with no sign of putting his feet up in the next 10.

Indeed, he is currently in training for his Autumn holiday. He gave up smoking earlier this year, and has cut out the little drinking he did. Now he's walking the Worksop hills where he was raised, and squeezing in the odd game of golf.



Stuart Johnson: copper-bottomed guarantee

Mr Johnson's employment history began with a stint in the police cadets, before doing his national service in the RAF. He joined the PSV industry back in 1959, selling vehicles for Kirkby where he rose through the ranks, then left to work a year in the sand and gravel industry.

He rejoined coaching and bussing in the sixties as sales director of Kirkby, eventually taking a stake in the business and the managing directorship. The late sixties and early seventies were halcyon days, when buyers like Bartons bought entire fleets, and Mr Johnson quickly became a household name in the Midlands.

It was in 1973 that he spotted a pretty young thing collecting spares from the parts store, legged it down to the counter and, after inquiries directed through counter staff, requested a date with Kathryn. He was turned down, chiefly on account of having grey hair and being 36. Never one to give up on a prospect, Mr Johnson phoned her at home and got his date. Eight months on, they were married.

He sold up his stake in Kirkby, ran a subsidiary of car and truck business BET in London, then started Stuart Johnson Ltd with Malcom Appleyard, selling Scania products. The business moved to Worksop in 1988, and was then hit by the recession, at which point Scania and SJ parted company.

Undaunted, he set up SJ Carlton, the Neoplan dealership, and has once again risen to the top, as chairman of the company, with Kathryn as company secretary and son Charles working his way up. His daughter, Emma, works in advertising.

In his private life, Mr Johnson enjoys nothing better than cooking the Sunday roast, then settling back to listen to the likes of Ella Fitzgerald. His favourite exercise is, however, jiving on the dance floor to rock and roll.

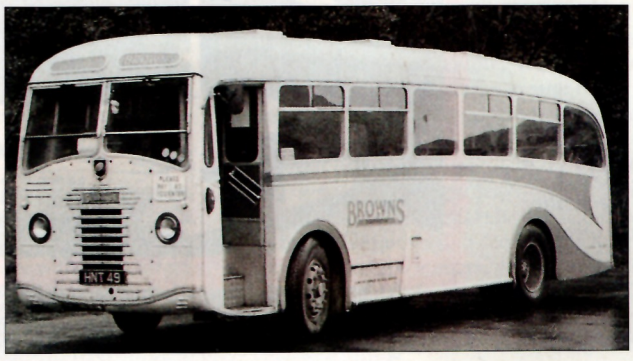
BYGONE DAYS

Mystery coach, what mystery?

WE had a massive response to our Bygone Days 'mystery' coach featured in our 4 September issue. Quite obviously it was not a mystery at all as so many of you knew what the vehicle was. As we said, it first appeared in our predecessor magazine, *Coachmart*.

Photographer Eric Ogden snapped it in 1970. And, as we said in our 11 September issue, Terry Capell, supervisor at Timeline in Shifnal was the first to name the coach as a Shrewsbury-built Sentinel SLC4 with Beadle bodywork, modified for local service operation, with the centre door moved to the front, in 1966.

However, our thanks to letter writers **Dr Bernard Hayes** of Handsworth Wood, Birmingham; **John Tincknell**, of Marlborough, Wilts; **Derek Westall**, company secretary of East Lancashire Coachbuilders, Blackburn, Lancs; **John Wateridge**, of Chipping Campden, Glos; **Richard Delahoy**, of Southend-on-Sea, Essex; **Raymond Taylor**, of Rutherglen, Glasgow; **Charlie Nelson** and **Huw Morgan**, of Caerphilly County Borough Council, Blackwood; **Terry Walker**, of Woodthorpe, York; and anyone else who wrote or telephoned us with the correct answer.



The letters furnished us with a wealth of information on the vehicle. We can't print it all for space reasons but the vehicle was one of at least eight Sentinels operated by H Brown and Sons, of Donnington Wood, near Oakengates, Shropshire, five of which had Beadle bodies. Seating capacity was 35, engine was an underfloor Sentinel four-cylinder 6.08-litre unit with five-speed gearbox and the vehicle was run on a local service to Wellington. It is thought to now belong to a Mr Wheatley of Kennilworth.

COACH AND BUS WEEK ENDING...

10 YEARS AGO

- DOVER reports that almost 16,000 coaches travel in July across the Channel - beating the previous record by 687 vehicles.
- THORNES Supreme of Bubwith, near Selby, buys Independent Coachways of Leeds. The deal means no changes of staff or vehicles, but Supreme's holidays will be sold through Independent's Leeds outlets.
- INCENTIVE Travel of West Mersea takes the last of three Kassbohrer Setra 215HDs to operate its tours and private hires. The high-floor vehicles are liveried in white with yellow and brown stripes.
- REPORTER Mark Barton gives the low-down on Chassis Developments of Leighton Buzzard, which offers conversions on Mercedes-Benz, Transit and other chassis-cowls and vans, but PSV conversion accounts for 10% of its turnover.

(*Coachmart*, 11 September 1987)

15 YEARS AGO

- *COACHMART* reports that a Welsh hotel is offering "love-in weekends for up to 13 couples in four-poster beds..." This somewhat cramped arrangement is available to ageing passengers in Anglesey.
- DUPLE announces its sales policy for the year, with models including the Laser, Caribbean, Dominant and Dominant Bus, being sold through 14 agents. Kevin Wood is the publicity manager, sales and marketing director is Doug Jack, and dealer manager Chris Lane. Prices range from £49,855 for the executive Caribbean down to £32,350 for the Laser tourer.
- THE classified advertising section reveals that accessible coaches are nothing new. A seller in Sunbury-on-Thames wants offers for a Ford A series with Ascough Clubman body which is fitted with a Ratcliff side-lift...

(*Coachmart*, 25 September 1982)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

The Editor, *Coach and Bus Week*, EMAP Automotive Ltd, Wentworth House, Wentworth Street, Peterborough PE1 1DS
fax: 01733 467154 e-mail: FrankF@automotive.emap.co.uk

Interiors issue needs thought

Your editorial relating to interior design and re-furbishment (*CBW*, 11 September) came, rather appropriately, at the same time as the announcement of Flight's purchase of Excelsior. I say appropriate because Ken Flight sets an excellent example to all in the coach industry, showing how to think innovatively, how to create new markets, how to set the very highest standards of quality, how to make good profits in an industry which, in many instances, struggles to make a profit at all and, tying in with your editorial, how to present the sort of image that attracts not only traditional type clients but also those who would not normally travel by coach.

You posed the question concerning redecoration, and I would entirely agree that we should spend more time on our interiors, for there is little point in doing a lovely re-paint job only for the paying customer to be left in a drab, anonymous and unappealing internal environment. Certainly we should be looking at good quality loose covers that allow quick refurbishment and easier cleaning. Roof and rack trim panels should be quick change to tie in with changed seats.

However, this rethink should go much further. Now that so many cars are having air conditioning fitted as standard we should not (especially with fixed windows) be providing our clients (and potential ex-car driver clients) with anything less - provided that with a much bigger market the air-con manufacturers make prices more realistic, which they have failed to do so far.

Our seat pitch should be geared more closely to the market, so that, while a pitch of 67cm may be fine for schools traffic, with the increasing height and size of humans we should be providing at the very least 80cm for all excursions, tours, private hire and similar work.

How about seat tables? Every train and plane passenger gets one, but if we fit them (still quite rare) they are attached to a movable seat back which can neatly dump a drink in the passenger's lap on recline. Why not update the railway style seat with a fixed back complete with table and a moveable cushion/back rather than move the back into the "personal space" of the client sat behind (something which is commented on frequently by my clients).

There are so many other aspects which could do with more thought. Most operators avoid carpet like the plague because of cleaning problems, but when did we last see lino in our homes or rubber in cars? Built-in vacuum points with the motor unit underfloor could overcome such resistance (with easier seat cleaning as a bonus). Built in litter disposal to each seat could complement this, and why not combine this with a seat back unit including grab handle, coat hook and cup holder in every case rather than the exception? I could go on, but what I am basically saying is that, while I support your fundamental comment, it needs more thought, a lot more - and if such thought were designed in at inception it need not cost a great deal - I would suggest significantly less than the £10,000 suggested by Mr Rook.

RON WHITTLE
Partner
Go Whittle
Kidderminster
Hereford & Worcester

Letter of the Week

Proposal discriminates against the poor

I can agree with much of Marksman's ingenious and original thinking (*CBW*, 4 September). However, his proposal to ban on-street garaging would have the effect of arbitrarily depriving many citizens from the practical possibility of car ownership at all. In the streets of pre-1919 terraced houses which exist in large parts of our northern towns and cities, no spare land exists on which to create off-street parking. Garaging is perforce on-street, or not at all. To ban it would be to deprive the people of modest means who occupy this simple and inexpensive housing from car ownership at all. It is not easy to see why those citizens alone should be discriminated against.

Better to limit the amount of either off-street or on-street parking at destination, then restrict the capacity of arterial routes and give advantage to bus users at the expense of car drivers by the liberal provision of bus priority at signal-controlled junctions. It would have much the same effect as Marksman's more radical notions in inhibiting car use.

A reordering of the tax regime might help also. Prohibit claims against tax liability for the provision and use of cars, whether business or private, and allow instead claims against tax for provable purchase of bus or rail season tickets. Reinstate higher rates of Vehicle Excise Duty for gas guzzlers. And, to limit pollution, aid our stricken farmers, and improve the balance of payments, give a tax subsidy (if we legally can under the terms of GATT) to the producers and vendors of bio-diesel, to make it comparable in price or cheaper than ordinary diesel.

COUNCILLOR PETER JOHNSON
Bolton
Lancs

Bikes on buses: racks and ruin

AE Foden does pick up on one element of fitting an external rack on a bus (*CBW*, 4 September) - but there are other reasons, too. The original specifier of the design, King Co Seattle Metro, wanted a system which was rapid to load, and simple to use and stow, while complying with Washington State vehicle regs, and staying on the bus in washing plant.

This is impressively achieved by the end result, which can be loaded in under 10 seconds at a stop - a very important consideration and the foldability of the rack allows vehicles to be as closely parked as before when out of service. US buses, like most UK ones, suffer from having only one normal way on and off, and trials of bikes inside in Seattle lasted one day before the drivers refused to do it.

Where the practice is to have a rear 'platform' and direct access for prams etc, the situation changes considerably. This is not to abandon the use of internal stowage where appropriate, but the rack allows for a new market to be invited on to existing services. When the number regularly exceed 4% of the passengers, ie two bikes on a full 49 seater, then investment in a more specialised system is likely to be justifiable. We continue to learn and I hope that, with the Cumbria and Brighton partners, we can give a useful report to the Cycle Challenge review in Nottingham on 26 November.

Meantime, I experience and hear reports of how passengers get treated as an inconvenient but essential result of operating a bus service - almost half a bus load got left the other Sunday, to wait 30 minutes for the next service, on a 60 to 70-minute journey (50 minutes in a car). On a contracted service I note the name on the nearside as I board and can predict the extent to which I will be thrown around and the vehicle will be driven aggressively in town traffic - sometimes I'll opt for the next bus if I know it has a better contractor.

Then there are the lock-outs when drivers are resting, or when crews change over, with passengers left to suffer the weather without apology or explanation. Well, just as I discovered the League of Cycling Purity, riding solid-tyred and single-gear bikes, we might hear of Charles A Banks and Bus Riders of Universally Wholesome Habits and Attributes (BROUWHAA) who are refined enough to believe that a creche is something which takes place between two motor cars, but never involves those well-behaved bus drivers (and sex is what one puts the rubbish in).

SHILLIBEER
Glasgow

Letter of the Week wins a Corgi Classics model bus

CORGI CLASSICS

COACH AND BUS WEEK

COACH INDUSTRY AWARDS 1998

IN ASSOCIATION WITH
THE COACH TOURISM COUNCIL

Friday 23rd January
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Be sure to book now!

TABLE BOOKING FORM Coach Industry Awards, Stakis Birmingham Metropole Hotel, Friday 23rd January 1998

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WIDE APPEAL

A wide-bodied Optimo offering 26-seat capacity has long been denied the UK market because of its weight - until now. Mike Morgan went to Portugal for a preview of a coach that will debut at Coach & Bus 97

THE LONG-RUNNING Toyota Optimo small coach now has an important new option - it can carry more seated passengers. By taking weight out of the interior of the Caetano bodywork, it is now possible to give UK operators a vehicle which has been sold in other European markets for years, yet has so far been denied to this country because of the tilt test.

As from early next year Toyota will be selling two types of Optimo both based on the same mark IV chassis. One will be the existing body with Fainsa recliners in two-plus-one layout and coach trim; the other, which will debut at the Coach & Bus 97 show, will be wider and have the potential for up to 26 high-back, fixed passenger seats.

Optimos have been a familiar sight since first introduced in 1987. During its 10-year production run there have been many changes but throughout this period one thing has remained constant. Coaches leaving the Caetano plant in Portugal for the UK have consistently accounted for around 50 per cent of output, which is just as well, because they have been different in more respects than simply being right-hand drive.

A little known fact is that the Optimos we receive are 140mm lower and have been 170mm narrower.

Consequently the stylish small coach has conveyed the image of something much larger but with capacity limited to a maximum of 21 seats or an option of 18 plus a larger boot.

With the advent of ABS plastic interior side panels, lighter floor construction and use of British-made and fitted Richards and Shaw seating, the unladen weight of the wide-bodied coach is reduced sufficiently to allow up to five extra seats. The standard UK Optimo is 2120mm wide and can only take a two-plus one seating layout. By going for the 2290mm width the extra 170mm now available

26-SEAT OPTIMO

ensures that 900mm double seats can be fitted on both sides.

As from January this year, current Optimo production is in a dedicated plant in the town of Ovar near Oporto in Portugal. Output is running at five per week but this level is just half of full capacity and there are imminent plans for a 50% boost.

One in two vehicles going down the line are for the UK, so the special arrangement for lower, narrower, right-hand-drive Optimos is taken on without too much of a problem. Around 50 per cent of the remainder (all wide-bodied) are for the Portuguese home market and the rest sell in Germany or Spain.

The first right-hand-drive, wide Optimo left the factory this month on the first leg of its journey to Coach & Bus 97 at the NEC on 9, 10, 11 October. Toyota (GB) coach sales manager, Steve Prime, said the base level DL specification had been selected to gauge market reaction to the concept before taking orders in preparation for volume production, which is scheduled to kick off in the first quarter of next year.

Despite being noticeably over-bodied, surprisingly, there is no appreciable change to the ride characteristics. During a first drive along the coast road south of Ovar, the 26 seater handled and manoeuvred with the same ease as its slimmer cousin. The coach was carrying a half-load of press and factory representatives but roll was absent and width-judgement was not impaired. However, there was less feedback through the steering wheel.

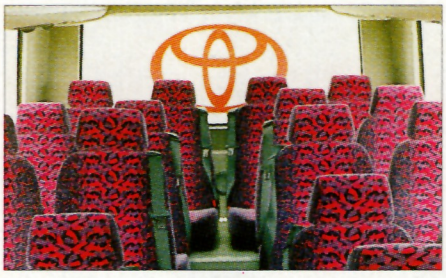
Use of plastic hard-finish on the interior results in a more austere passenger environment but the Richards & Shaw seats were comfortable and had the added bonus of three-point seatbelts.

In addition to the extra seating, the more generous dimensions give a significant increase in luggage capacity. What is a modest 44 cubic feet on the 2120mm-wide 21 seater swells to 70 cubic feet on the 2290mm-wide coach. Other permutations could include lower seating and even larger boot. The Portuguese market is offered five alternatives which include a compromise half-width big boot with recessed rear seat and wheelchair accessible version fitted with 16 seats and space for four wheelchairs.

This latter arrangement depends on a raised floor at the rear to eliminate the wheelarches and may not be suitable on UK vehicles which have bodywork lowered by 140 mm - particularly since seats need to be fitted as low as possible to keep the centre of gravity down.

Mr Prime is keeping an open mind on specifications adopted for the new wide-bodied coach and any options that will be offered. His confidence that it will attract additional sales for the Optimo appears justified. However, unless the yet to be announced price structure acts as a deterrent, our first impressions suggest that, for most applications, the larger Optimo is the more attractive proposition - with or without the extra seating.

Next stop NEC: 26-seat Optimo IV is heading for the Toyota stand at the October show


Extra width means two-plus-two seating: DL prototype has Richards & Shaw seats

Body overhang: wide-bodied Optimo has same chassis as standard vehicle

Middle-age spread: a side-by-side shot shows how the Optimo has blossomed

Chassis is assembled from a kit in Caetano factory alongside other light commercials

Almost finished: standard-width Optimo IV for Blue Iris of Bristol ready for UK front

Close inspection: base colour applied to Optimo for Johnson Bros, Worksop

SPECIFICATION

CHASSIS	Toyota Optimo IV
BODY	Caetano
	standard-width - up to 21 seats; wide-bodied - up to 26 seats
PRICE	from £58,620
ENGINE:	Toyota 15 B-FT turbocharged with intercooler
POWER:	245 bhp (100 kW) @ 3,000 rpm
CAPACITY:	8.3 litre
TORQUE:	756 Lbf ft (360Nm) @ 1,600-2,400 rpm
GEARBOX:	5-speed manual

DIMENSIONS

	STANDARD OPTIMO IV	WIDE-BODIED OPTIMO
LENGTH:	7.535 metres	7.535 metres
WIDTH:	2.12 metres	2.29 metres
HEIGHT:	2.65 metres	2.65 metres
WHEELBASE:	3.935 metres	3.935 metres
UNLADEN WEIGHT:	4,250 kg	not yet known
GVW:	6,300 kg	6,300 kg

Quality Hallmark.

For companies like Hallmark the Optimo range from Toyota has become the gold standard for midi-coaches. Every year the letter on the Hallmark coaches changes as they replace their older Optimo models with newer designs. This year it's the Optimo IV, with even more precious metal in the shape of a new 4.1 litre turbo-charged engine. For reassurance and comfort there are also new wider seats, all of which have seat belts. To find out why the Optimo IV is such a sound investment for the future, call Steve Prime at Toyota, on 01737 768 585. It's the marque of quality.

THE COACH IN FRONT IS A TOYOTA

For more information please contact Steve Prime, Coach Sales Manager, Toyota (GB) Ltd., The Quadrangle, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1PX. Tel. 01737 768 585. Erringtons of Evington, Leicester. Tel. 0116 273 0421. Regal Coach Sales, Glasgow. Tel. 0141 776 3268. AD Coach Sales, Devon. Tel. 01884 860767. Salvador Caetano (UK) Ltd., Heather. Tel. 01530 263 333.

Latest batch of Caetanos arrive

SALVADOR CAETANO

CAETANO has completed an order for 40 coaches for Bus Eireann's express and private hire market, and has started work on a further 30 vehicles.

The latest batch gives the Irish national bus company 117 Caetano coaches, though the model is a hybrid of the Portuguese company's Delta and Algarve designs. The majority of the last order was for 53 seaters with in-swing doors, enlarged destination blind and Bus Eireann's own moquette.

They were specified by the company to serve its extensive express network, which is still growing as Eire goes through a mini-boom.

Five of the last order were, however, air-conditioned 48 seaters with toilet and courier seat to satisfy the increasing demand for private hire and corporate work.

The latest order for 30 is to express specification. All use Volvo B10M chassis with ZF automatic gearbox.

Caetano has supplied vehicles to Bus Eireann since 1994, and has also seen its sales effort in the republic pay off among private operators: "Buyers have included Collins Coaches of Carrickmacross, The Kavanagh Group of Urlingford, Deros' Coach Tours of Killarney, Ardcavan Coach Tours of Wexford, Regal Bus of Dublin, Conways of Limerick and Kearns of Birr, Co Offaly," said sales administrator Wilf Lewis.

New 'baby' for Hatts family

SJ CARLTON

THIS 9.9-metre Neoplan Jetliner may look expensive, but its owner, Hatts Coaches, says it is the best value 'little un' on the market.

"We used to have a 36-seat, short Van Rooijen Odyssee and, when we sold it, we discovered that some hirers specifically wanted this size of vehicle," said partner Adrian Hillier. "So we were in the market for an air-conditioned coach-built midi and quickly discovered that only the Neoplan would give us an all-in price for everything factory fitted on our time scale.

"Looking at other vehicles, we found that, with all the extras, they were more expensive."

The Mercedes-Benz engined 32-seater has full rear servery, toilet, fridge, safe and a novel three-screen video system. Though the front monitor is fixed, the rear two descend from the luggage rack when the system is needed, and tuck away at other times.

Hatts is a family-owned business, now in its 69th year. It was established in 1929 by Adrian Hillier's great grandfather, William Hatt, and is now run as a partnership between Adrian Hillier and his father, Michael (pictured accepting the keys from Peter Prime) and mother. Also working at the Chippenham base - just off the M4 - are Mr Hillier's wife, sister and brother-in-law.

Hatts runs 35 vehicles, 10 of which are full execs. Work includes 12 schools contracts, Hatts' own tour programme, tour company work and a burgeoning market for corporate and private hire.

at Bus Eireann

Pyoneering way forward

EAST LANCS

THE cash saved by utilising a used B10M chassis has been diverted into a brand-new body on the Dunn-Line bus.

It is the first time East Lancs' Pyoneer has been used to re-body a chassis, and is one of three which will be delivered to the Nottingham company: "We see this as the way forward for our double-decker work," said md Bob Dunn.

The bus has 80 seatbelted high-back seats, high-visibility stanchions, and carries the full Dunn-Line livery of purple, blue and pink crescents, in this example, placed across the windows on semi-transparent vinyl.

The B10M chassis in the Mark I version was taken from a used coach and rebuilt before going to East Lancs. It gives sufficient power for Dunn-Line to use it for long-distance excursions and a range of school hires, as well as being suitable for service work when needed.

IN BRIEF

Fleet up to 52 in anniversary year

FISHWICKS of Leyland, Lancashire, has added four Dart SLFs with Wrights Crusader bodies on to trunk services. The buses, which have 41 seats, join the 48-strong fleet in Fishwicks' 90th anniversary year.

Express has a lot to offer

A REGISTRATION plate which reflects not only the company but the service is a valuable addition to this Optare Vectra. On route 1 Caernarvon to Blaenau Ffestiniog, it is run by Express Motor Services.

Celebrating in style with Alizee

TYRER'S of Adlington has celebrated 25 years in business with the purchase of a Van Hool Alizee on B10M chassis. Gordon and Sylvia Buckle went to Moseley to collect their vehicle in person from sales executive Tim Fairless.

Makita's 9227CB polisher/sander has variable speeds

Answer lies in hybrid

SANDING and polishing disc power tools are not the same, says Makita, whose latest solution is a hybrid.

Sanding requires high disc speed but polishing at high speed can generate heat and cause polish to discolour and burn. The answer for polishing is low disc speed but high torque.

Makita's 9227CB sander/polisher has a dial-in variable speed from 600 to 3,000 rpm, with additional speed control through the trigger. Rated at 1200W, with high torque, it adapts easily to its different tasks, says Makita. What's more, it has a built-in static earth to prevent unwelcome shocks when polishing.

■ *Contact Makita Tools suppliers for full details.*

Convinced by reduction in 'no-starts'

Fox 'proves' case for Battery Guard

By Mark Williams

IT WAS 'case proven' for Midland Fox of Leicester when a battery-saving device fitted to 13 new Olympians significantly reduced a year's no-starts.

Now, Midland Fox is fitting Battery Guard to every one of its new vehicles as a matter of policy: "We've taken the decision to fit Battery Guard as standard," said fleet engineering director Brian Barraclough. "And we are examining the possibility of retrofitting it to some of our existing fleet."

Mr Barraclough says he was convinced of its cost-effectiveness after calculating the cost of sending out fitters with booster batteries, and the time wasted moving vehicles in the depot around buses with flat batteries.

Battery Guard is a simple device which monitors current drain and voltage level. Should the voltage drop below critical level, for any reason, it isolates the battery long before the power is too low to start the engine. The driver simply operates a reset switch to reconnect the battery for starting. Midland Fox had the device factory fitted to 25 Mercedes-Benz Varios being delivered, and six Dennis Dart SLFs.

■ *Battery Guard is sold by Fleetmaster Bus & Coach of Horsham. Contact Steve Swain or Mark Stephenson on 01403 276222 for details.*

Working high like walking on air

WORK platforms which trail electrical cable or require lots of effort to hoist their occupant to roof height have their drawbacks - mostly solved with C&S Equipment's Liftman.

This airline-driven lift takes the reach well above roof height of most vehicles, giving staff a 2.75-metre high platform from which to work. Taking it to working height is a button operation, and the addition of a compressed air point fitted to the Liftman does away with trailing air hose at neck height, ready to snare the unwary.

What's more, it can be driven from working height by the operator, using a footpedal in the floor to power the 'engine' and a steering wheel for manoeuvring. The platform uses the same amount of air as a spray gun. C&S also supplies the wall-mounted Wall-Man system

■ *Contact C&S Equipment on 01787 224047.*

Taking the stress out of reversing

THE latest in proximity warning devices is being marketed to the operator as an ideal way to reduce accident risk... and perhaps insurance premiums.

UltraPark uses ultrasonic technology to provide full-width coverage behind coaches and buses, with cab warnings for the driver as he manoeuvres. Using a countdown system automatically activated when reverse is engaged, the alarm is claimed not only to prevent disasters, but to make reversing less stressful for drivers.

UltraPark can be fitted without specialist tools or knowledge within a matter of minutes and, once installed, is claimed to be unaffected by temperatures or build-up of traffic dirt.

■ *Details of UltraPark from Laver Technology, on 01279 436080.*

'Cut emissions, and boost mpg'

LONDON-based manufacturer Bilstein claims its powered oil flush machine can deliver short-term results in terms of emissions, and long-term results for engine life.

The Bilstein R-200 Flush System uses a mixture of solvents powered through the engine to remove sludge and particle residues, says the maker, improving fuel economy and reducing emissions by as much as 10% - carbon monoxide by almost 30%.

The company's own tests using figures supplied by a bus company testing the machine demonstrate savings of up to £1,380 a vehicle per year... and all attainable with just an extra 20 minutes before the oil change is completed.

■ *For full details, contact Vines Trading at 5 Vines Avenue, London N3 2QD, tel 0181 349 1757, fax 0181 343 1218.*

Deb launches a technical hotline

NEW REGULATIONS which make it an offence not to report cases of dermatitis have spurred hand-care specialist Deb to launch a technical hotline.

Deb warns that employers face litigation and increased employee liability insurance costs if they do not take skin problems seriously.

Industrial diseases such as oil acne, oil cancer from dirty clothes and even testicular cancer promoted by oily rags in pockets strengthen the arm of lawyers in pursuing employee claims. The Health and Safety Executive's *Good Health is Good Business*, which highlights skin problems as a significant cause of time off work, has been supported by the Vehicle Builders and Repairers' Association.

"All too often, employers say "What do I get back from implementing health and safety policies," and this is the attitude we have to try to change," said the The Health and Safety Executive. "The benefits of setting up health and safety systems are fewer sick days, improved efficiency, increased productivity, a happier workforce, and less chance of litigation."

Deb says a three-stage programme of skincare - protection, cleaning and replenishment of moisture - cannot only demonstrate best practice but prevent the problem occurring.

■ *The Deb technical services hotline is 01773 880367, or write to Liz Bowley, Deb Ltd, Spencer Road, Belper, Derbyshire DE56 1JX.*

Dermatitis caused by soiling

CBW Classified 22 pages this week DON'T miss out on the deals

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Fully fitted with seatbelts, radio/cassette/PA, full draw curtains, 53 seats plus courier, MoT to May, tax to July, one owner from new, good condition.

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E 1988 DAF MB PLAXTON PARAMOUNT MK 3 3500, MoT 3/98, 53 seats . . . . . **£42,000 + VAT**
CCE/CR/RC/RPA/WD

D 1987 DAF DHS PLAXTON PARAMOUNT MK 3 3200, MoT 8/98, 53 seats . . . . . **£35,000 + VAT**
RC/RPA/WD

D 1986 DAF DHTD PLAXTON PARAMOUNT MK 2 3200, MoT 8/98, 55 seats . . . . . **£34,000 + VAT**
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1991 Toyota Optimo Mk II, 21 seats, drinks and carpets, excellent condition, taxed and tested **£26,950**

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SOLD

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71560/CM

SCANIA K112 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 4000

71 seater, 1987 (Oct), PP, repanelled, full executive, new MoT.

£59,500 ono
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71558/CM

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Toilet, TV, reclining seats, etc.
Excellent condition.

£59,000
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71617/CO

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1985 B reg
TIGER 245
PARAMOUNT 3500

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Owned by us from new.
MoT to May '98.

Tel:
(01259) 216180

71614/CO

VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P599, 1983 reg, 50 seater, rear sunken toilet, wired for TV/video, tested February 1997 . . . . . **£26,500**

LEYLAND LEOPARD, Willowbrook body, 1/5/82 reg, 49 seater and standees, tested to April 1998 (ideal schools etc) **£2,750**

LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON VIEWMASTER, 12/8/77 reg, 53 seater, Express doors, tested to February 1998 S/A (ideal schools) **£2,750**

LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, 76 reg, 49 seater, p/door, tested February 98 S/A, straight coach for year **£3,000**

LEYLAND LEOPARD PLAXTON SUPREME, 27/4/81 reg, 53 seater, retrimmed 2 weeks ago, 12 months test S/A. **£6,250**

LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE DOMINANT 4, 1/8/81 reg, 53 seater, retrimmed 2 weeks ago, seat belts, tested November 1997 S/A, 2 recon heads 2 months ago **£7,500**

MAN REEVE BURGESS, 28 seater, p/door, 6/12/83 reg, tested March 1998, cheap to clear **£4,500**

1986 608D MERCEDES, 20 seater plus standees, p/door, (ideal schools)
Without test **£1,750**
With test **£2,300**

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71613/CM

Due to new vehicles arriving shortly the following coaches are for sale:

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1989 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE, 49/53 reclining seats, courier, centre demountable toilet, continental door, curtains, PP, radio, P/A, MoT January 1998. . . . . **£72,500**

1989 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 reclining seats, curtains, PP, radio, P/A, courier seat, new MoT, choice of 2 . . . . . **£59,500 each**

BAKERS DOLPHIN
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Phone 01934 635635

71559/CM

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LEYLAND ATLANTEANS, X reg, 1981/82. Leyland 680 engines, 5 speed semi auto, PAS, single entrance Willowbrook bodies, 78 seats. Excellent cond and appearance. Choice of 5. Various long MoT's. Reduced to sell . . . . . **£4,500+VAT**

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BOVA EUROPA, 1983, private plate, 49 seater with toilet, MoT'd until end of December 1997, tidy, **£15,000 + VAT ono. Telephone 01506 826444.** 71249/BO

BREAKING BOVA EUROPA, 1983, complete except engine and gearbox. **Tel: 01873 855832, Mobile: 0973 218127.** 71678/BO

BOVA EUROPA, 53 seater, 1982, painted white, used on tour work only, first to see will buy, £13,500. **Tel: 01773 590034, 01773 830921.** 71242/BOV

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1982
DAF MB200
SUPREME 5
12 months MoT, 55 seats
£11,000 ono
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0958 575154
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£14,500 ovno.
01837 82297
(Devon). 71743/DAF

DAF DKVL VAN HOOL, 1983 H, 49 seats, full Executive, retrimmed last summer, new TV/video fitted June this year, coffee machine, toilet, January 1998 MoT, excellent condition, **£40,000 + VAT. 01506 826444 (day), 0385 286708 (mobile).** 71601/DAF

1988 DAF BERKHOF luxury double deck, 74 recliners, toilet, tables, bunk, mirrored glass, tested, 11.6 engine and ZF 6 speed splitter, also 89 DAF Algarve exec, 49 + toilet, TV, many extras, low mileage from new, 11.6 engine. Part exchange welcome. **Tel: Blythswood Motors 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 eves.** 71973/DAF

DENNIS

DENNIS DART SLF 10.8M WRIGHTS CRUSADER OR EAST LANCS SPRYTE, 1997, "R", plain white, 41 seats, 21 standees, tip-up seating, arrangement for Mother & Buggy position, side and rear T.R.N. Rental, lease or contract hire. **Dawsonrentals Ltd 01908 218111.** 71996/DE

DENNIS JAVELIN 290 GX CAETANO ALGARAVE II, 1996 "N", plain white, 51 reclining seats, full belts, toilet, drinks machine, radio and PA. Rental, lease or sale. **Dawsonrentals Ltd 01908 218111.** 71992/DE

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FORD

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LEYLAND

1984 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 11 metre, express doors, 53 seats, seatbelts, MoT til May 1998, radio/PA, **£50,300 + VAT. Tel: 01302 709526.** 71239/LE

1983 (Oct) LEYLAND TIGER PARAMOUNT, 53 seater, semi-auto ZF, express air doors, MoT October 1997, cherished number if required. **£11,000 + VAT. Tel: 01226 382473, 0966 421678.** 71604/LE

1978 LEYLAND NATIONAL Mk1, 49 seats, fitted Leyland 680 engine, new MoT, **£3750 ono.** Also, choice of **LEYLAND NATIONALS (510 ENGINES),** 49 seats, various MoT's, **from £2,750. 0141 889 0811.** 71603/LE

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LEYLAND

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e-mail fleet.master@btinternet.com 71978/LE

MERCEDES

F REG MERCEDES 407D, 15 belted seats, recent new engine fitted, £5,995 (No vat). **Tel: 01437 767916.** 71974/ME

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MERCEDES 0303, 53 seats, seatbelts, MoT October 1998, air conditioning, **£25,500 ono. Tel: 01923 859396 office hours.** 71993/ME

1987 MERCEDES 609D, Reeve Burgess, 20 seats, 7 standees, power door, owned by us from new, MoT 01/09/98, **£8,500 + VAT. Tel: 01923 225412 or 0468 765977.** 71246/ME

96 MERC SPRINTER, only 21,000, 16 coach seats, all removable or 5 wheelchairs + 3 seated, top spec, tints, lug racks etc. unmarked. **Tel: Blythswood Motors, 0141 221 3165 or 0141 639 6107 (eves).** 71980/ME

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19/21 seat, 6 cylinder turbo diesel, finished in ummarked white, red velour interior, PAS outstanding condition, full test
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P reg
LDV PILOT
Diesel, 12 seat minibus, 3000 miles only, power steering, highback seats, mint condition, balance of manufacturers warranty
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1986
LEYLAND CUB
20 seat access bus, power door, full wheelchair tracking, powered tail-lift, excellent condition.
FULL TEST Good value at only
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M reg
MIDI TURBO DIESEL
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K reg
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Turbo, extra long wheelbase, 18 seat executive minicoach, lowered entry step, high back coach seats, side skirts, outstanding example of this popular vehicle
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E 88
MERCEDES 507
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N 96
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M Reg
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F reg
MERCEDES 507D
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M 95
TRANSIT 190 DIESEL
14 seat minibus, advanced conversion, high back seats, COIF, low mileage, choice of 4, excellent condition
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D reg
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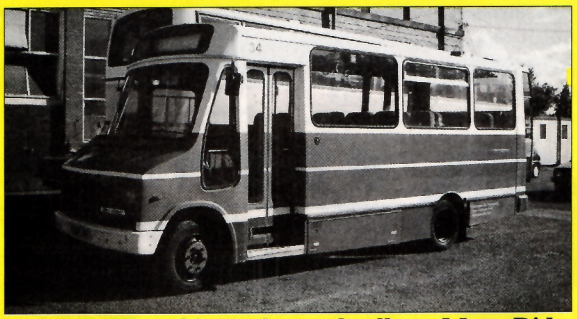

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1989 F MCW MetroRiders, long wheelbase model with heavy duty underframe, Cummins engine, Allison automatic gearbox, disc brakes all round, fast-flow entrance and up to 31 seats plus 9 standees. Excellent choice.

COACH-SEATED VEHICLES

1988 E Renault S56 Mark II 23-seat coach, Alexander AM bodywork (1988 model type with high window line and seamless panelling), disc brakes, automatic gearbox, attractive red/grey interior, luggage pen, seat belts, excellent pedigree, very clean vehicle, only one left at just £5,995

1989 F Renault S56 Mark II East Lancs 21-seat coach, Perkins 4-cylinder turbo, automatic gearbox, disc brakes, retarder, price includes retrim in your choice of moquette as well as our usual preparation package, one only, £6,995

1988 E Iveco 49.10 Turbodaily Robin Hood 19-seat coach, automatic gearbox, beige/orange interior, luggage pen, power door, one only, £3,995

1987 D and E Renault S56 mark I 19/21 seat coaches, Alexander AM type alloy bodywork, automatic gearboxes, power doors, beige/orange moquette, saloon heaters, good condition, ideal dual purpose vehicles, just four left, £4,295 to £4,495 **or with retrimmed seats in your choice of the latest moquettes for just £500 extra.**

BUS SEATED VEHICLES

1988 E/F Renault S56 Mark II 25-seat buses, choice of Alexander all aluminium or Northern Counties bodywork, choice of blue/grey, fawn or brown stripe interior, all have automatic gearboxes, power steering, power doors, ticket machine fitting and full soft trim, good choice of very clean, mostly one-owner vehicles from just £4,495

1989 G Renault S56 Mark II Northern Counties 25-seater, auto, one only, £6,495

1989 G Iveco 49.10 Carlyle Mark II 23-seat bus, manual or automatic from £6,495

1989 F Ford Transit 8/11-seat non-PSV petrol, new MoT, very tidy, £2,495

1988 E/F Renault S56 Mark II Northern Counties 25-seaters, choice from £4,995

1988 E/F Iveco 49.10 TurboDaily 21-seaters, manual, choice from £4,495

1988 E Freight Rover Sherpa Carlyle Mark II 20-seat minibus, one only, £3,495

1988 E Renault S56 Mark II Alexander Am-type 25-seat bus, one only, £4,995

1987 E Iveco 49.10 Robin Hood 25-seaters, manual or auto, choice of three, £5,295 each

1987 D MCW MetroRider 23-seaters, Cummins or Perkins, choice of 3, £6,995 each

1987 D Iveco 49.10 Robin Hood 19/21 seaters, manual, wide choice, £3,995

1986 C Mercedes 608D Reeve Burgess/PMT 20-seaters, price includes lower body panel, 2 left £5,495

All the above prices include our full preparation package, comprising a new PCV MOT, full mechanical inspection and report with defects rectified, and all necessary body repairs and repanelling. Trade-ins are welcomed, and we can offer finance for any vehicle in stock, subject to status. Big reductions for vehicles sold prior to preparation!

DUE IN SHORTLY

1989 F Talbot Pullman 12/19 seat wheelchair accessible with tail lift, one only, MOT 4/98

1988/9 F Freight Rover Sherpa 350 Crystals 16-seat coach, luggage racks, long MOT

1987 D Freight Rover Carlyle Mark I 20-seat buses with Ford DI engine and Ford MT75 5-speed gearboxes, choice of two

THIS WEEK'S DRIVE-AWAY BARGAINS

1988 E Renault S56 Mark II Reeve Burgess Beaver 25-seat bus, MOT to December 1997, auto gearbox, very clean, one only, £3,295

1986 C Mercedes 608D Reeve Burgess 20-seat bus, MOT January 1988, attractive grey/blue interior, £3,295

1987 D Mercedes 608D Alexander 20-seat bus, MOT 7/98, taxed November, recent respray in white, £3,995

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R Mercedes Benz Vario. Executive Pullman. 24 seater superb luxury coach. M2 luxury coach seats. Power operated plug door. Coach back end with huge drop well boot. Luxury high line plant on windows. Super luxury fittings and trim.

R LDV Convoy. Luxury 16 seaters. Front entry. Dropped steps. High line plant on windows. Executive trim and M2 seating. Luxury side skirts. Luggage racks and full sized coach vents. Options for turbo diesel, wheelchair access and removable seating.

R Iveco Ford 49-10 Turbo D. Super luxury 19 seater executive coach. Coach rear end with small boot. Super luxury M2, full sized coach seats with Fainsa luxury armrests. Glass coach plug door. Super luxury coach fittings and interior trim.

R Mercedes Benz Sprinter. Turbo D. Medium wheelbase, super luxury executive 12 seater mini coach. Superbly spacious. Full sized M2 luxury coach seats. Air conditioning. Side skirts. Timber cappings with luxury curtains. Drop step front entry.

R Iveco Ford 49-10 Turbo D. Pullman Executive. 16 seater with huge rear boot. Full executive trim and fittings. Full sized M2 seats with luxury arm rests. Walnut cappings and luxury curtains. TV / video, P.A. system, reading lights. Option for air conditioning.

R Renault B110 Messenger 2.9 Turbo D. Front entry 16 seater luxury midi coach. Raised floor with huge rear drop well boot. Full sized luxury M2 coach seats with armrests, 3 level luxury interior trim with shaped luggage racks and reading lights. Spacious and rugged.

R Renault Master. Luxury 13 passenger wheelchair accessible mini coach. Raised floor with hidden chair lift. Moquette trim and luxury fittings. Low entry step. Side skirts. Panoramic tinted windows. Front passenger captains seats and much much more.

R Renault Messenger B110. Luxury 18 passenger wheelchair accessible mini coach. Raised floor pan with no wheel arch intrusion. Multiple wheelchair positions. Tracked rear M2 seating. Luxury moquette trim. Front entry with drop step. Side skirts. Under body wheel chair lift. A true dual role vehicle.

R Mercedes Benz Vito. Vitenza executive 7 seater. Full executive trim and full sized luxury coach seating with Fainsa arm rests and quilted head rest covers. Twin sunroofs. Luxury curved plant on windows. Huge rear boot. Mercedes Benz alloy wheels. Deep pile carpet. Colour keyed bumpers. 2.3 diesel engine. Stylish and elegant. The very best available.

R Renault B110 Messenger Turbo D. 16 seater wheelchair accessible mini coach. Raised floor. Under body chair lift. Lowered front entry. Luxury trim and fittings. Tracked rear M2 seats. Panoramic tinted windows. Full sized coach seats. Spacious and flexible.

R Fiat EuroCab 2000. Ultra modern wheelchair accessible 'Black Cabs'. Choice of colours models. 6 and 7 seaters. Over 50 options and design specifications including turbo diesel, traditional taxi rear ends, multiple wheelchair access, 2 way intercom systems, taxi door locking units, lowered suspension options, modern taxi sign pods, kerb loading seating etc.

R Mercedes Benz. 7 seater, EuroCab, luxury 'Black Cabs'. Executive hackney interior with heavy duty partition and taxi style trim and fittings. Lowered suspension with access for 2 large wheelchairs. Ultra modern design. Front and rear luggage bays. Vented rear heating and optional vented air conditioning system. Choice of specs and colours.

R Ducato Diesel. Luxury 8 seater Taxi bus. Super luxury trim and M2 seating. Front luggage bay. Tracking for one wheelchair with options for more. Executive interior styling. Tinted hi line windows. Unbeatable value for money.

Quality New Conversions on low mileage vehicles

P Ford 2.5 D. Executive 8 seater Taxi buses. Choice of 6 superb vehicles. All low mileage one owner with brand new luxury Jubilee conversions. M2 seating and tracking for one wheelchair. Front and rear luggage options. Standard and semi high tops.

N Volkswagen diesel. Luxury 8 seater Taxi buses. Choice of colours. New super luxury Jubilee conversions. High backed M2 seats in moquette. Tracking for one wheelchair passenger. Options for front and rear luggage. Superb throughout.

N Fiat Ducato Diesel. SWB. Luxury 8 seater Taxi bus. Beautiful example with full M2 seating and wheelchair access. Tinted windows.Luxury trim. Front luggage pen. Perfect for airport transfer or executive work.

N Ford 2.5 D. Executive 8 seaters. Luxury moquette trim. Tracking for one wheelchair. Choice of 3. Standard and semi high top examples. Tinted windows, luxury carpet. Wheel trims and executive graphics pack. Top value for money.

Previously owned vehicles

P Fiat Scudo. Wheelchair accessible Taxi bus. Rear Rolac ramp. Tracked seating. Luxury trim. PAS, tinted windows. Metallic paint. Very low mileage.

N Ford Jubilee EuroCab. Executive 8 seater taxi with full EuroCab body style kit. Semi raised roof. Alloy wheels. Luxury moquette trim. Tracked seating. Wheelchair access.

M LDV 400 D. 16 seaters. Choice of 3 super low mileage examples. All with PAS, M2 seats and lap diag. seatbelts. Ideal for school contract and private hire work. Unbeatable value for money. All finished in white with cloth trim.

M Ford Transit LWB 2.5 Turbo D. 15 seaters. Mint condition. M2 seats and belts. Choice of 3 semi high tops. All one owner. All ready to go right now. Choice of manual or fully automatic gearboxes. Please call for details.

M Ford Transit 2.5 D. 8 and 12 seaters. Choice of 5. Various colours. Standard roof and semi high models available. M2 seats and seatbelts. Choice of seating plans.

K Nissan diesel. 6 and 7 seaters. Low mileage. New luxury trim. Wheelchair accessible. Choice of colours and specifications. Top value for money.

L Ford 2.5 D LWB. 15 and 8 seaters with rear luggage and wheelchair space. Choice of 2. Excellent condition. Ideal for contract or airport transfer work.

K Ford 2.5 D LWB High top. Luxury 7 seater with rear luggage cage. Luxury M2 high backed seats with lap / diagonal seatbelts. Very low mileage. Mint condition throughout.

K LDV 400 D High roof. Front entry, 16 seater. Lux. moquette trim and seats. Tinted windows. Luggage racks. Quad vent. Low entry step. COIF. Ready to go right now.

K Renault Trafic 8 seater Taxi buses. Choice of 2 with wheelchair access. Low mileage. Mint condition. Perfect for local wheelchair contracts. Top value for money.

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H reg IVECO ACCESS BUS, hideaway tail-lift, tracking, seatbelts**£9,500**

G reg OMNI, 7 seater, wheelchair accessible, tested **£3,950**

F reg RENAULT MASTER, 15 seat minicoach, lap belts, tested ..**£3,500**

J reg RENAULT MASTER, wheelchair accessible, up to 14 seats

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1994 (L) FORD TRANSIT, 15 seat + driver. Non PSV.
1991 (H) MERCEDES 410D, 15 seats

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J reg TALBOT TRIAXLE FREEWAY, Diesel Turbo, 18 seats, low mileage, Ratcliff tail-lift, one owner

H reg TRANSIT DORMOBILE, 12-16 seats, Ratcliffe tail-lift, one owner. Choice of two. Choice of four.

G reg TRANSIT DORMOBILE 2.5 Di, 12-16 seats, Ratcliff t/lift, one owner. Extra long wheelbase. Choice of two.

VAN CONVERSIONS

L reg RENAULT MASTER T35D LWB, PAS, 12 seats + wheel chairs, lowering suspension + ramp, one owner. Choice of three.

L reg RENAULT TRAFIC T1400 HI-TOP DIESEL SLD, lowering suspension + ramp, 8 seater, Unwin tracking, one owner. Choice of four

L reg MERCEDES 208 DIESEL, PAS, 12 seater, plus tail lift, Devon conversion, 1 owner.

K reg RENAULT MASTER T35D LWB, SLD, 10 seats + w/chairs, lowering suspension, one owner. Choice of two

K reg RENAULT TRAFIC T1100 SLD, Diesel, LWB, Hi-roof, 12 seats + wheelchairs, Ratcliff t/lift, 1 owner, low mileage, service history.

J reg FORD TRANSIT NEW GEN 2.5 Di LWB SLD, 14 seats, PLS, under sling tail-lift, 1 owner.

H reg LDV 400 SLD, Diesel, Hi-top, 16 seater, Henderson tuckaway t/lift, one owner. Choice of four.

H reg RENAULT MASTER T35D SLD, 14 seater, Rolac ramp, Unwin tracking, tinted glass, lowering suspension, one owner. Choice of three.

G reg MERCEDES 308D, 9 seater + wheelchairs, Ratcliff tail-lift, PAS, SLD, high roof, 1 owner.

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1995 SCANIA IRIZAR CENTURY
49 reclining seats, air conditioning, toilet, continental door, video & monitor, fridge, water boiler. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - red/orange. MOT May 1998.

1994 BOVA FUTURA FHD
51/55 reclining seats, demountable toilet, continental door, driver's bunk.. Interior -grey; Exterior - white. MOT January 1998.

1992 BOVA FUTURA FHD
53/57 reclining seats, centre sunken demountable toilet, continental door, wired for video/monitor, driver's bunk. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT December 1997.

1992 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE D/H
48 reclining seats, rear floor mounted toilet, servery with fridge, water boiler. Interior - blue/grey; Exterior - white/yellow/blue. MOT December 1997

1990 DAF SB2300 JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE
51 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, water boiler, wired for video/monitor. Interior - grey/maroon; Exterior - white. MOT March 1998.

1990 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 3500
49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, aircraft type lockers. Interior -brown, Exterior- white. MOT May 1998

1989 DAF SB3000 CAETANO ALGARVE
53 reclining seats. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - red/white/blue. MOT June 1998

1988 VOLVO B10M PLAXTON 4000
65 reclining seats, toilet, water boiler, wired for video/monitor, TELMA retarder, Interior -autumn tint; Exterior -white. MOT March 1998

1987 BEDFORD YNV DUPLE 320
53 reclining seats, power door. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior -white/red. MOT April 1998

1987 FREIGHT ROVER
20 seats, power door.Exterior-white. MOT August 1998.

1986 BOVA FUTURA FHD
49 reclining seats, centre sunken toilet, continental door, water boiler, wired for video/monitor. Interior - brown; Exterior - white. MOT May 1998.

1985 NEOPLAN SKYLINER
Mercedes engine, manual gearbox, 75 reclining seats, toilet, fridge, water boiler, TELMA retarder. Interior -red; Exterior -white/red/yellow. MOT January 1998

1985 LEYLAND TIGER DUPLE CARRIBEAN
49 reclining seats, rear sunken toilet, continental door. Interior - autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT March 1998.

1985 FORD TRANSIT 190 (Diesel)
16 seats, power operated door. Interior - brown; Exterior - white/blue. MOT March 1998.

1984 DAF DKFL CAETANO ALGARVE
50 reclining seats, rear floor level toilet, continental door. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - white. MOT July 1998.

1983 DAF DKFL PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200
51 reclining seats, power operated entrance door, TELMA retarder. Interior -autumn tint; Exterior - white.

1983 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P90
58 reclining seats, toilet, water boiler. Interior -brown; Exterior -red/white. MOT July 1998

1983 BOVA EUROPA
53 seats, courier seat, power operated entrance door. Interior -red; Exterior - white. MOT October 1997

1980 FORD R1114 DUPLE DOMINANT II
53 seats, power operated entrance door. Interior -grey/brown; Exterior - white/blue. MOT May 1998

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1990 VOLVO B10M, PLAXTON PARAMOUNT, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, rear offside sunken toilet, continental door and steps, fridge, double glazing, drinks machine, new MoT

1989 VOLVO B10M GLE, JONCKHEERE DEAUVILLE, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, toilet, double glazing, wiring for video, Webasto and including air conditioning

1988 BOVA FUTURA FHD/12/29/INTEGRAL, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet, continental door, exterior white

1988 (August) BOVA FUTURA FHD/12/29 INTEGRAL, 49 reclining seats, courier seat, centre sunken toilet,continental door, exterior white

1985 LEYLAND TIGER 245 TL11, BERKHOF EVEREST, 49 reclining seats and courier seat, continental door, sunken toilet, wiring for video

1985 MAN 8134, GC SMITH WHIPPET, 28 seater, very clean and tidy, long MoT

1983 VOLVO B10M JONCKHEERE P90, 57 seats, toilet, long MoT, Dateless plate, exterior plain white

1982 LEYLAND LEOPARD ECW dual purpose, 49 bus seats, MoT February 1998

1979 VOLVO B58 DUPLE DOMINANT, 53 seater, very clean interior, new MoT

1979 AEC RELIANCE 760, DUPLE DOMINANT II EXPRESS, 53 seats, blue and white exterior, long MoT

1978 BEDFORD YMT, VAN HOOL 300, 53 seats, blue & white exterior, new MoT.

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NEW MERC VARIO 614. Luxury 24 large boot. P/door. Stock.

NEW 711 Turbo, large boot, full coach spec. 24 seat Luxury, boot, P swivel door. Stock

NEW MERC 611 TURBO, as above, p/door. Stock.

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MERC SPRINTER 412 16 wheelchair. Stock.

NEW MERC 410, 16 luxury plus w/chair option. Stock.

NEW TRANSIT 16 high roof front entry. Stock.
NEW FORD TOURNEO, 9 seat, diesel. Stock.
NEW TRANSIT w/chair taxi bus. Stock.
NEW DAF, Convoy, 16 PSV, coach spec. Turbo.
NEW DAF, 16 hi roof, Convoy. Turbo. Stock.
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NEW VW Taxibus, double door. Stock.

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LEYLAND DAF CONVOY, turbo and non turbo, 5 chairs, 16 lux. Stock.

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NEW MERC VARIO 24 coach seat, mobility or 6 w/chairs. Stock.

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96 SPRINTER 412, 5/chairs, 16 seat
95 MERC 410 16 PSV, tested
94 MERC 811 p/door, 33 + 12 service bus
94 MERC 709, 24/5 wheelchairs
94 LEYLAND DAF, 16 coach, p/door
94 LEYLAND DAF, 20 seat, service, p/door

94 B10 PREMIER. D/glazed, fridge, coffee, 49 + toilet.

93/91 TALBOT TRI-AXLE, 22 + standees
90 TRANSIT LWB, Petrol, 12 seats.
90 MERC 709, 25 coach, p/door, boot.
90 VAN HOOL, 49, belts, toilet, fridge
90 TRANSIT, LWB 12 seat diesel PSV

89 SANOS exec (Merc), 49 + toilet, TV

89 DAF, Algarve exec 11.6, toilet, TV

89 VOLVO VAN HOOL SUPER HIGH. 49, toilet, TV, fridge, coffee machine.

88 DAF BERKHOF SBR 3000, 75 seat exec d/deck, toilet, monitors, good trim, ready to work, tested

89 MERC 609, 19 seat coach

89 DUPLE 425 DAF, ZF 7 speed, 55 recliners.

88/89/90 TALBOT, triaxles. 22+ standees.
88 MERC, 19 coach seat, tested.
88 F/ROVER, 20 seats, Carlyle body.
88 MERC 814 (6 cyl) 29 coach seats
88 FREIGHT ROVER, 16 diesel, PSV coach.
88 TRANSIT, 12, Petrol
87 MERC, 19 coach spec.
87 MCW METRORIDER, Perkins, 23 + 6
87 MERC 814. 29 seats, new test.
87 RENAULT DODGE, service bus, 29+ standees

86 B10 ALGARVE retrimmed 49/53 Exec

86 VOLVO B9, 33 coach seats and standees and boot.
86 RENAULT DODGE, 20 service, auto
86 R/DODGE, 25 seat, 5 speed
85 DODGE PERKINS, 39 seat, 5 speed, manual, power door

86 VOLVO B9, Plaxton 33 coach seat + boot and standees. Autobox

85 SETRA, exec, 49, toilet, TV

84 B10 VOLVO BERKHOF, executive, TV, retrimmed.

84 DAF JONCKHEERE, 49 + toilet, retrimmed.

83 DODGE R BURGESS, diesel, auto, 17 F dr.
82 BEDFORD, 35 seat, 8.5 metres.
82 DENNIS, V8 auto Alexander Service Bus

81/82 LEYLAND DOUBLE DECK, 75 seat, East Lancs, SA, tested and tyres

77 FORD 53 DUPLE, £750, tested
75 AEC ZF, retrimmed throughout, 53

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1995 DENNIS JAVELIN BERKHOF EXCELLENCE 1000, 53 recliners, double glazing, crew seat, rear continental door, exterior blue/white/gold, MoT 26/11/97 ..... **£109,500**

1995 MERCEDES 814D AUTOBUS CLASSIQUE, 33 seats, seat belts all seats, rear boot, power door, tinted windows, MoT 5/11/97..... **£59,500**

1994 MERCEDES 814 OPTARE STARIDER COACH, 29 seats, rear boot, seat belts all seats, in-swung coach power door, MoT 3/11/97..... **£43,000**

1991 SCANIA K93 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3200, 53 recliners, seat belts all seats, power door, radio/tape/PA, tinted windows, grey/red/orange interior, exterior white/pink, MoT 20/1/98 ..... **£64,000**

1989 (DEC) VOLVO B10M IKARUS BLUE DANUBE. 53 recliners, crew seat, double glazing, radio/tape/PA, exterior white, MoT 13/9/98 ..... **£52,500**

1989 SCANIA K112 PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 51 recliners, crew seat, double glazed, Telma, sunken toilet, centre continental door, fridge, boiler, splitter gearbox, fawn/orange interior, exterior white/lilac/pale yellow, MoT 12/2/90..... **£67,500**

1988 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON DERWENT, 53 coach seats, rear boot, exterior white, MoT 13/4/98 ..... **£45,000**

1988 LEYLAND TIGER 290 DUPLE 340, 55 recliners, seat belts all seats, radio/tape/PA, Telma retarder, drivers fan, rear continental door, Cummins L10 engine, manual gearbox, grey interior, white/red/green/grey exterior, MoT 2/2/98 ..... **£49,000**

1987 (OCT) FREIGHT ROVER SHERPA CARLYLE, 20 seat + 4 standees bus, moquette seats, fawn/orange interior, exterior white, MoT 18/9/98 ..... **£3,750**

1987 VOLVO B10M VAN HOOL ALIZEE, 53 recliners, double glazing, side window blinds, Telma retarder, crew seat, grey/blue interior, exterior white, unsignwritten, MoT 24/7/98 ..... **£59,500**

1986 MAN 16.280 BERKHOF ESPRITE, 49 recliners, crew seat, continental door, double glazing, Peage window, interior grey/red, exterior blue/white..... **£25,000**

1986 LAG PANORAMIC, 49 recliners, centre continental door, sunken toilet, seat belts, water boiler, radio/tape/PA, drivers bunk, interior grey/red, exterior white, MoT 4/8/98 ..... **£35,000**

1985 BEDFORD YNT DUPLE LASER II, 53 seats, crew seat, power door, side lockers, seat belts all seats, fawn interior, exterior cream/green/orange, MoT 20/1/98..... **£15,000**

1984 NEOPLAN SKYLINER, 77 seats, crew seat, toilet, water boiler, 2 tables lower deck, grey interior, exterior white/mauve/pink, MoT 6/2/98 ..... **£29,500**

1983 LEYLAND TIGER PLAXTON PARAMOUNT 3500, 46 recliners, crew seat, rear continental door, seat belts all seats, sunken toilet, interior fawn/brown/red, exterior door cream/orange/green, MoT 2/11/97 ..... **£25,000**

1978 BEDFORD YMT DUPLE DOMINANT II, 50 seats, radio, autumn/rosewood interior, exterior white/blue, turquoise, MoT 8/8/98 ..... **£2,950**

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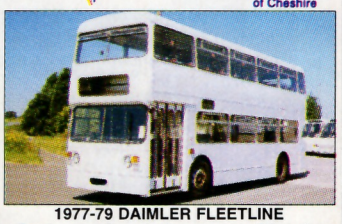

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1987 MCW METRORIDER
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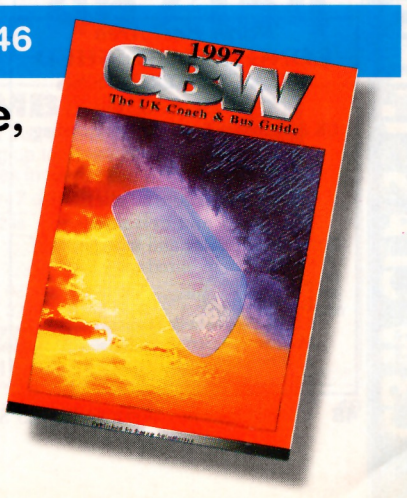

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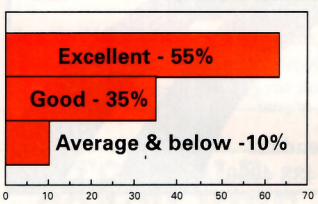

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For more information contact Andrew Warrington, Public Transport Manager, tel 01738 476530.

Application forms and further details are available from the Human Resources Department, Perth & Kinross Council, PO Box 77, 11 Tay Street, Perth PH1 5LQ. Tel: 01738 475400/475437 (answering service).

Closing date 9 October 1997.

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PEOPLE

Timms gets BMAC sales post

TRANSPORT lighting specialist BMAC of Hyde, Cheshire, has appointed Andrew Timms as its sales manager.

Mr Timms has been in the PSV industry for 23 years, starting with a spell at the NBC. He has worked in sales with Salvador Caetano and Kassbohrer, ending up at Pindar plc, the media and printing company, before joining BMAC.

As a result, long-time BMAC sales manager Chris Clarke has moved on to specialise in the rapidly-growing, post-privatisation rail market.

Copper joins Eurolines

EUROLINES has appointed its first national sales manager - former Holyman Sally Ferries account manager Sue Copper.

Mrs Copper brings to Eurolines experience of retail sales, which will be used to develop new business for the international coach operator. She will be particularly focussed on forging better links and support with the ticket sales trade.

Sue Copper: forging links

Euro role for Volvo chief

VOLVO'S UK financial and contract services manager Barrie Cload has been promoted to a European role.

Mr Cload, 54, becomes executive vice president of Volvo Truck Finance BV, based in Netherlands, though he will be based at Warwick. His responsibility encompasses roughly half the Volvo products sold in Europe, but he says the UK experience will be invaluable.

"There is still considerable potential for development in the UK but our edge in this specialist field makes us an ideal model for those markets and countries where such services have yet to become established," said Mr Cload.

Mr Cload joined Volvo in 1987 as md of what was then called Ailsa Truck Finance. Previously, he had been sales director at UDT and had worked at Ford for 16 years, including six as chief exec of Ford Credit.

Promotion: Barrie Cload becomes exec vice president

Uxbridge Buses' general manager Ian McAllister and BAA Heathrow public transport manager John Lamb present a super-size cheque to Adrian Joyce

Driver is user friendly

A JUST reward for a year's hard work, getting to know the passengers on CentreWest's route A10, has lined Adrian Joyce's pocket with £1,000 and earned him the title Most Friendly Bus Driver of the Year.

The BAA-organised competition asked passengers to cast a vote for most cheerful driver in and out of BAA's airports.

The A10 runs between Uxbridge, Stockley Park and Heathrow Central using lowfloor buses. It won a Most Caring Bus Staff Award last year.

"I am over the moon that so many people have voted for me," said Mr Joyce. "I have enjoyed driving the A10 and getting to know my regular passengers, who have been a pleasure to drive to work each day."

The service, supported by BAA Heathrow, the Stockley Park Consortium and Hillingdon, is contracted to London Transport Buses.

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